SPIRAL INTO HORROR

UZUMAKI

JUNJI ITO

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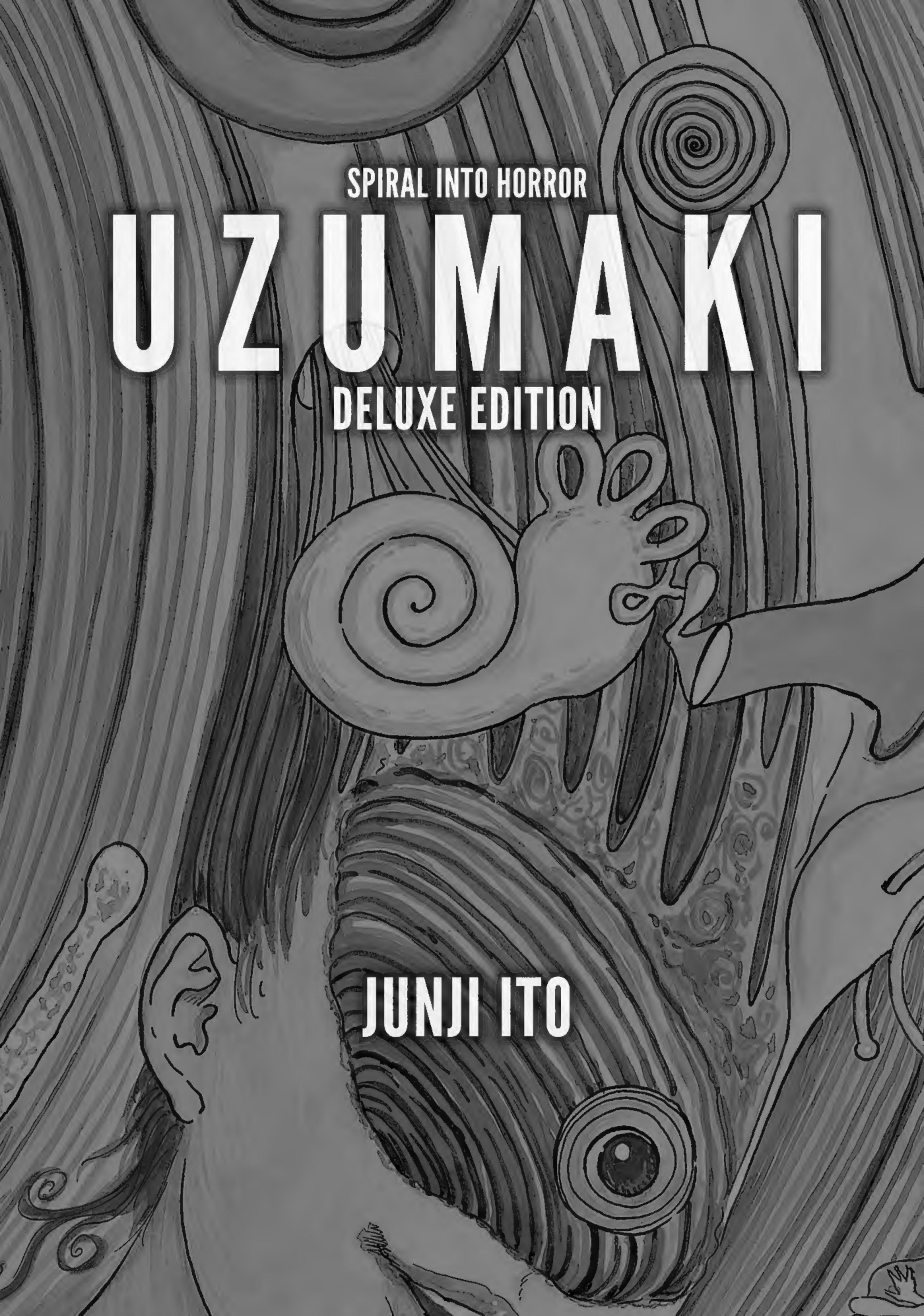
DELUXE EDITION



JUNJI ITO

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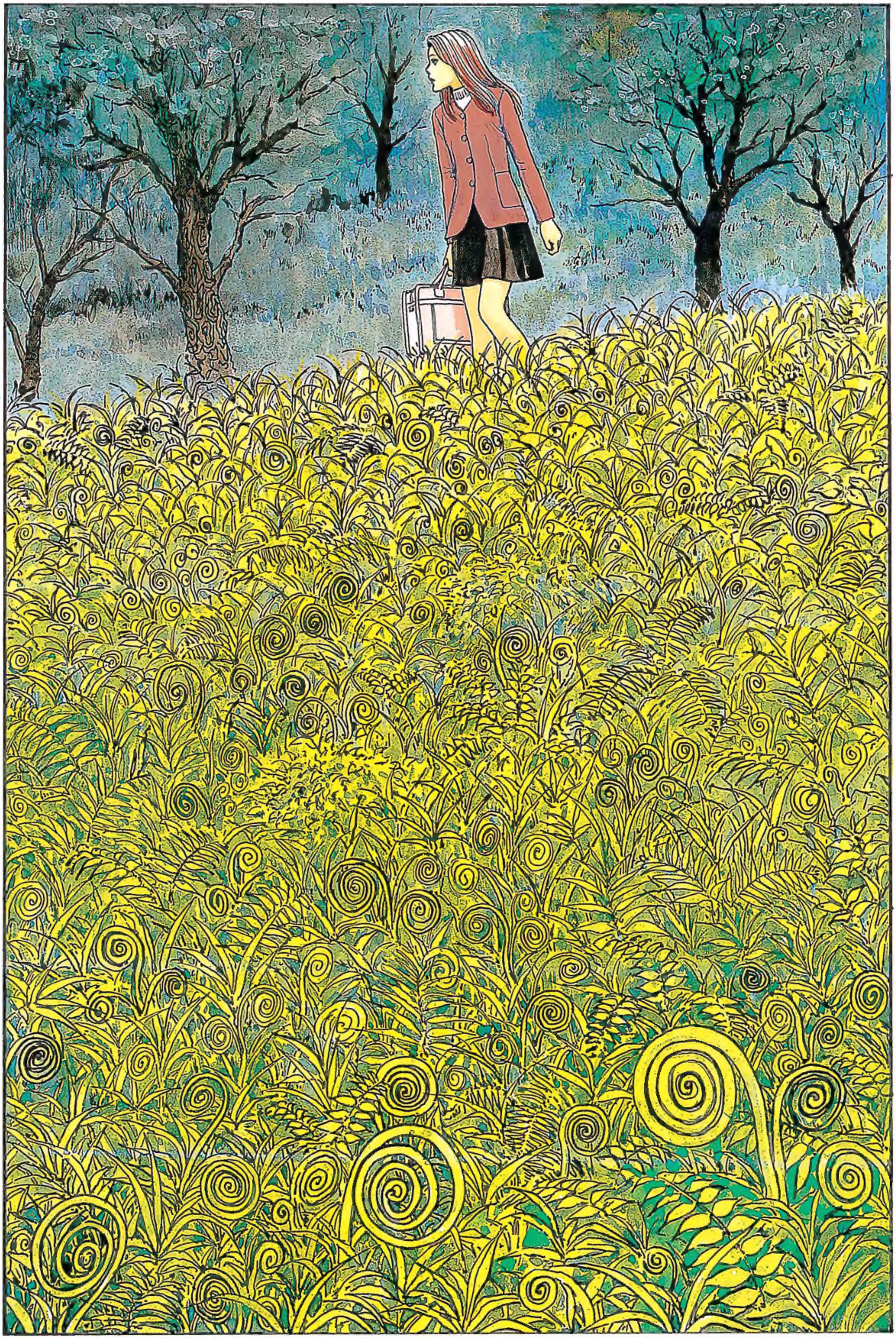
THIS IS KUROUZU-CHO, WHERE I GREW UP...

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU...

CHAPTER 1

THE SPIRAL OBSESSION

...THE STRANGE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE HERE.



MY NAME IS KIRIE GOSHIMA.

I ATTEND KUROUZU HIGH SCHOOL, LOCATED HALFWAY UP THE MOUNTAIN OVERLOOKING OUR TOWN.

...IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF THE TOWN.

I LIVE WITH MY FATHER WHO IS A POTTER, MY MOTHER AND MY YOUNGER BROTHER...

OH NO... I'M LATE! I MIGHT MISS SHUICHI AT THE STATION!

AIEE!

FWEEE

A WHIRL-WIND...

WHAT?

WHY, THAT'S SHUICHI'S FATHER.

HELLO, SIR.

WHAT'S HE DOING THERE?

...

MAYBE IT'S NOT HIM.

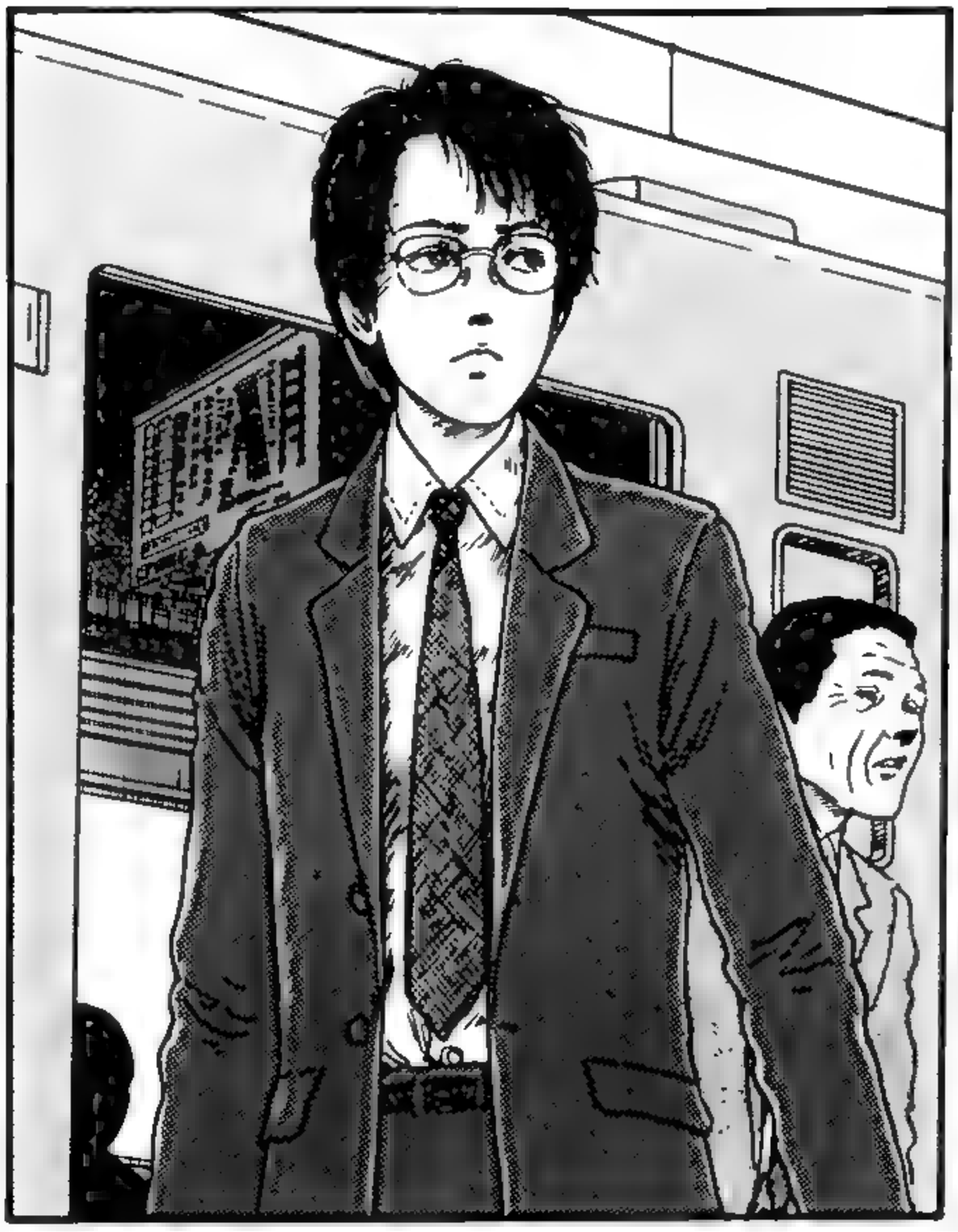
...

WEIRD...

KUROUZU STATION

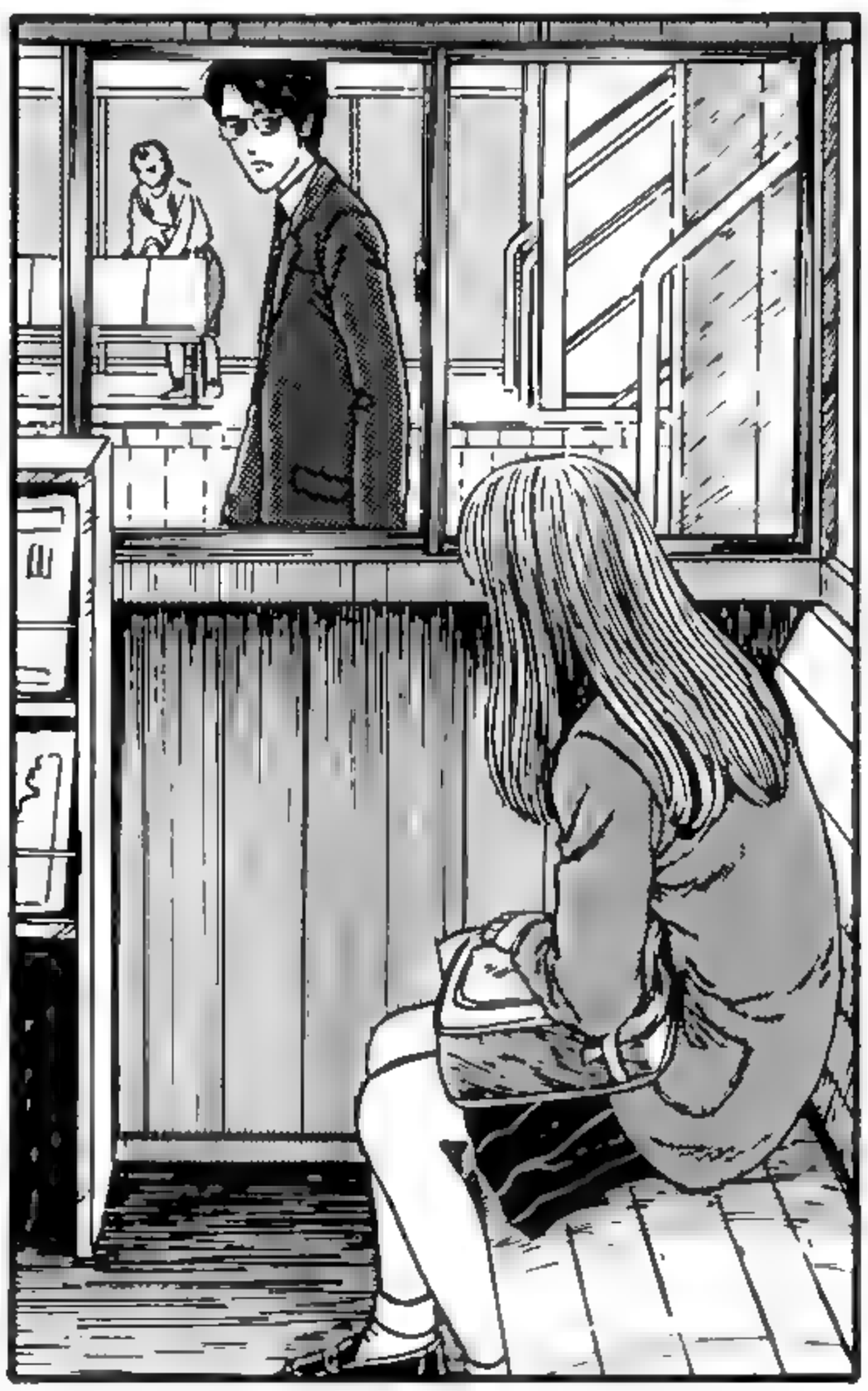
KLAK

KLAK



F-SHHHHH

HEY, SHUICHI.
SHUICHI SAITO AND I USED TO BE CLASSMATES, BUT NOW HE GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL IN THE NEXT TOWN.



...

...BUT IT WAS KIND OF STRANGE. HE WAS STARING AT AN EMPTY SNAIL SHELL...

IT MIGHT'VE BEEN SOMEONE ELSE. I DON'T KNOW... THE ALLEY WAS DARK...

HEY... YOU KNOW WHAT? I THINK I SAW YOUR FATHER...

...

STRANGE

...

JUST...

STRANGE? HOW SO?

OH... YEAH, THAT'S DAD.

HE'S BEEN STRANGE LATELY.

...

WHAT'S WRONG?

SHUICHI, YOU'VE BEEN ACTING DEPRESSED...

IS SOME-THING BOTHER-ING YOU?

...LET'S LEAVE THIS TOWN TOGETHER.

KIRIE...

I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE.

I'M SERIOUS.

WHAT? YOU MEAN RUN AWAY?

LEAVE?

I FEEL DIZZY EVERY TIME I GET OFF AT THE STATION PLATFORM.

IT'S SO OBVIOUS TO ME BECAUSE I SPEND THE DAY AWAY FROM HERE.

THIS TOWN IS DRIVING ME INSANE!!

WE'LL GO CRAZY IF WE STAY HERE.

I CAN'T STAND THIS PLACE.

BUT... DON'T YOU FEEL IT?

I DON'T GET IT.

WHOOOOOO

WHOOOOOOO

I DON'T FEEL IT...

I HATE IT!

IT JUST PIERCES THROUGH MY EARS!!

I HATE THAT SOUND!

WHOOOOO

HEY... IT'S ALREADY FIVE ...

I... I HAVE TO GET HOME.

I HATE THAT GLOOMY SEA, TOO.

AND THAT BLACK LIGHT-HOUSE... IT'S EVIL.

THE OCEAN LOOKS NOTHING LIKE THIS FROM MIDORIYAMA-SHI, WHERE I GO TO SCHOOL.

SPIRALS... THIS TOWN IS CONTAMI-NATED WITH SPIRALS...

YES, WINDING ...I'M GETTING WOUND UP...

THE LOOMING MOUNTAINS BEHIND US...

...THE WINDING STREETS ...IT ALL GETS ON MY NERVES.

...NO-NOTHING ...

OH...

HUH... WHAT? WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?

...?

MR. GOSHIMA, YOU'RE ALWAYS WORKING SO HARD...

WELL, YOU KNOW...

THE NEXT DAY, SHUICHI'S FATHER VISITED MY FATHER AT WORK.

IT'S REALLY THE ART OF THE SPIRAL!

NO, NO! I TRULY RESPECT YOU. MAKING THESE TRADITIONAL CERAMICS...

IT'S NOT EASY BEING A CRAFTS-MAN.

...IT'S MORE "WORKING SLOW" THAN WORKING HARD.

IT CAN BE PRETTY *DIZZYING*... HA HA...

OH, YEAH... THE SPIN-NING WHEEL ...

THE ART OF THE SPIRAL?

I'M SORRY?

THE SPIRAL PATTERN IS CRUCIAL!

I WANT ONE WITH A SPIRAL PATTERN.

I WANT ONE THAT WILL MAKE ME DIZZY.

YES! PLEASE! CAN YOU MAKE ME ONE?

BLACK... A BLACK SPIRAL WOULD BE PERFECT!!

IT GOES LIKE THIS... AROUND AND AROUND.

WIND-UP SPRINGS, SCOTCH TAPE, MOSQUITO REPELLENT INCENSE, EVEN TWISTING VINES...

OLD AND NEW KIMONOS WITH VOLUTE PATTERNS, CONCHES, SNAIL SHELLS, AMMONITE FOSSILS...

THEY'RE EVERY-WHERE ONCE YOU LOOK FOR THEM!

LATELY I'VE COME TO LOVE THAT PATTERN.

I'M COLLECTING EVERYTHING THAT HAS SPIRALS.

MONEY IS NO OBJECT. NAME YOUR PRICE.

SO I THOUGHT, "WHY NOT ASK THE TOWN'S BEST POTTER TO MAKE ME A SPIRAL BOWL?"

IT FILLS ME WITH A DEEP FASCINATION ...LIKE NOTHING ELSE IN NATURE... NO OTHER SHAPE...

MR. GOSHIMA, I FIND THE SPIRAL TO BE VERY MYSTICAL.

...

AND NO ONE BUT YOU CAN CREATE SUCH ART!!

I'M SURE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND HOW WONDERFUL THE SPIRAL IS!! IT IS PERFECT, THE MOST SUBLIME ART!!

WHY WOULD HE BE FIXATED WITH SPIRALS?

I'M SORRY YOU SAW THAT. HE'S BEEN WEIRD LATELY.

UMM... YEAH... HE FREAKED ME OUT A LITTLE.

DIDN'T MY DAD VISIT YOUR HOUSE YESTERDAY?

WHICH GOT MY DAD GOING. HE'S ALREADY WORK-ING ON IT.

ANYWAY, HE CALLED MY DAD AN ARTIST...

HE STOPPED GOING TO WORK. NOW HE JUST SPENDS ALL DAY IN HIS STUDY...

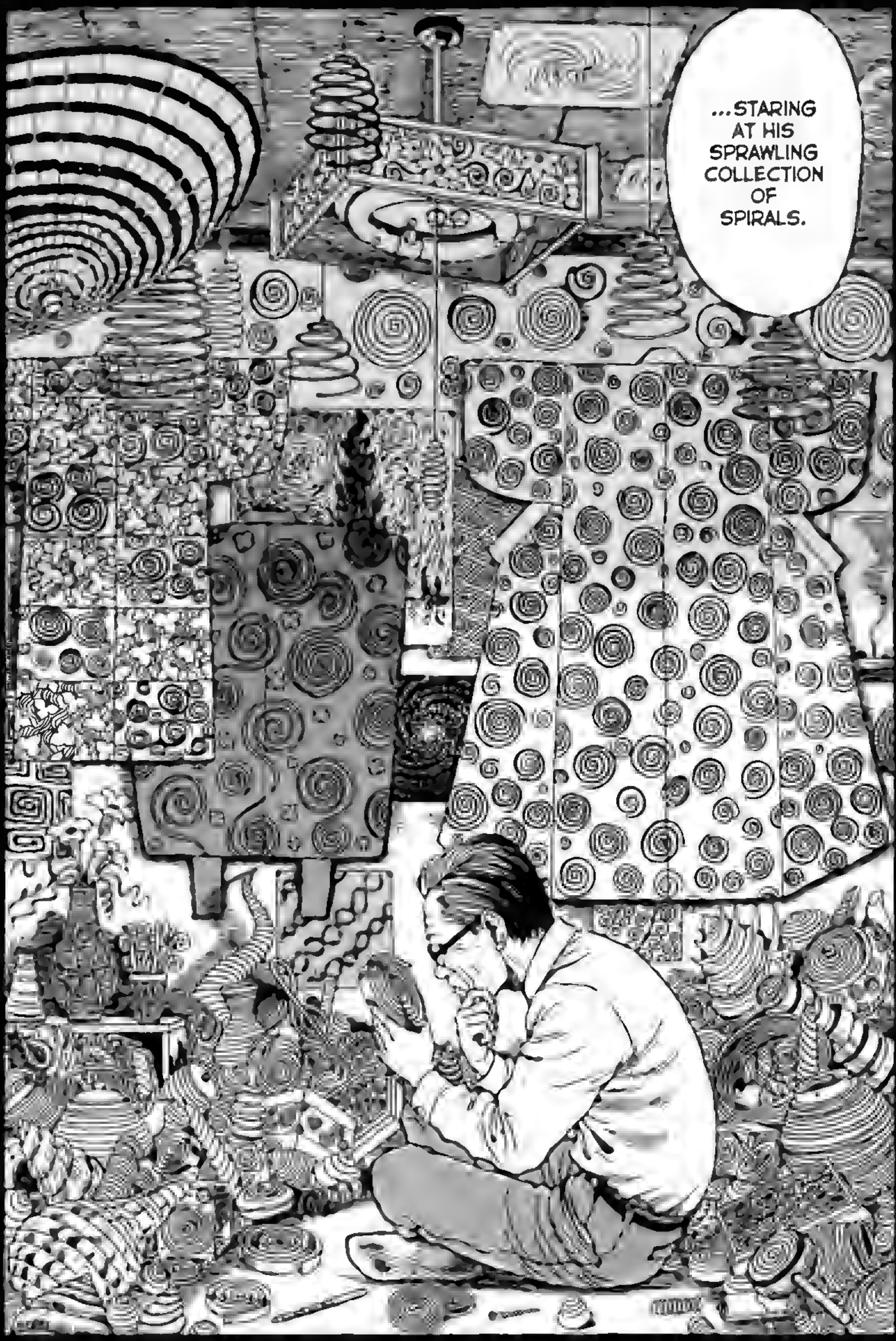
...HOW ABNORMAL HIS OBSESSION'S BECOME.

I MEAN, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO COLLECT MUCH STRANGER THINGS.

I DON'T THINK IT'S THAT WEIRD TO BE INTO SPIRALS.

LIKE CIGA-RETTE BUTTS ...

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW...


...STARING AT HIS SPRAWLING COLLECTION OF SPIRALS.

AND WHAT'S WEIRD IS THAT...

HE JUST STARES INTO THE SPIRAL.

ONCE HE'S FIXATED HE CAN'T HEAR US.

HUH?

...HIS EYES START SPINNING AROUND... AROUND AND AROUND... IT'S SO STRANGE.

MAYBE HE'S JUST TRYING TO GET A LAUGH OUT OF YOU.

THEY SPIN LIKE THEY'RE FOLLOWING THE SPIRAL.

HIS EYES SPIN?

HIS RIGHT AND LEFT EYE MOVE INDEPEN-DENTLY OF EACH OTHER!

NO, IT'S NOT FUNNY AT ALL!!

THEN THIS HAPPENED DURING DINNER.

HIS RIGHT AND LEFT EYE... SEPA-RATELY?

I CAN'T EAT MISO WITHOUT SPIRAL FISHCAKE!

HMPH!

MY MOM EXPLAINED THAT SHE RAN OUT OF THEM.

HE GOT REALLY ANGRY BECAUSE THERE WEREN'T SPIRAL-PATTERNED FISHCAKES IN THE MISO SOUP.

HE WAS SATISFIED.

SUDDENLY HE STARTED TO STIR THE MISO, VERY FAST...

TAK TAK TAK

SHRRRRRRR

PLASH

HHNNN ...

SPPLISHH

NOW HE ALWAYS STIRS A WHIRLPOOL BEFORE HE BATHES!

I'M SORRY ...IT'S JUST...

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU?

THERE'S NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT IT!

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!

HEE HEE ...

I DON'T BLAME YOU. I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT EITHER.

...YOU MIGHT HATE THIS TOWN AS MUCH AS I DO.

THEN YOU'LL SEE HOW SERIOUS THIS IS.

WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER AND SEE FOR YOURSELF?

THEN ...

LET'S SEE...

WELL...

BUT WHY?

I THINK IT'S BECAUSE OF THIS TOWN THAT MY DAD'S GETTING STRANGE.

...

WHY WOULD I HATE THIS TOWN?

LOOK AT ALL THOSE WHIRL-POOLS.

ODD?

LOOK AT THIS STREAM.

DO YOU SEE SOME-THING ODD?

BUT I DON'T SEE THAT MANY WHIRLPOOLS IN MIDORIYAMA-SHI.

YEAH, WELL... IT COULD BE.

OH... WELL... THAT'S PROBABLY DUE TO THE FLOW.

I'M NOT SURE BUT ...

...

BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR FATHER'S OBSESSION WITH SPIRALS?

AND THESE DUST DEVILS.

THEN THERE'S THE WHIRLWINDS.

?!

HOW COULD YOU?!

AAAAHHH!

STOP IT, PLEASE!!

WHY, YOU DAMN-

DAD!? MOM!?

WHAT'S GOING ON!?

WHILE I WAS OUT!

SHE THREW AWAY MY COLLEC-TION!!

WHAT HAP-PENED?!

STOP IT, DAD!!

HUFF...

HUFF...

HUFF...

I HAD TO GET RID OF IT!! YOU HAVE TO GO TO WORK!!

YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP, DEAR!!

WELL, I DON'T CARE.

SO IT'S GONE THEN.

HAH!!

YOU CAN EXPRESS THE SPIRAL THROUGH YOUR OWN BODY!!

YOU'LL SEE!

I FINALLY REALIZED THAT YOU CAN MAKE SPIRALS YOURSELF!

I DON'T NEED TO COLLECT SPIRALS ANYMORE!

LIKE THIS!!

RR RL

RLLL

HA HA HA!

HIS EYES WERE SPINNING AROUND AND AROUND...

HA HA HA HA HA!

I SAW IT MYSELF NOW.

... SEPARATELY ...

...SHUICHI DIDN'T SAY A WORD ABOUT HIS FATHER.

FOR SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THAT...

I'M DONE WITH MR. SAITO'S PIECE, SO COULD YOU DELIVER IT FOR ME?

YES, DAD?

HEY, KIRIE!

...

IT'S KIRIE...

EXCUSE ME...

OH, HI. SHUICHI'S OUT.

FWM

...

I'M SORRY BUT I DON'T REALLY NEED IT ANYMORE.

OH YES, OF COURSE.

PIECE... I ORDERED ?

I-I JUST CAME TO DELIVER THIS PIECE YOU ORDERED...

WHAT?

THE SPIRAL BOWL...

LOOK AT WHAT I CAN DO NOW.

YOU CAN CALL THE SPIRAL FROM WITHIN YOURSELF.

KIRIE... AS I SAID BEFORE...

BUT THIS...

I DON'T NEED THOSE THINGS.

AIEEEE!!

SHANG

UNN...

UR...

URGGLL!

AIEEEE!!

?

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS.

WHY, THANK YOU SO MUCH.

WE HAVE THE ITEM YOU ORDERED.

HELLO! DELIVERY FROM TANAKA COOPER.

A FEW DAYS LATER ...

...MR. SAITO PASSED AWAY.

ROAARRR

...DO YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW MY FATHER DIED?

KIRIE...

...THOUGHT HE FELL DOWN THE STAIRS.

I...

...

BUT IT'S NOT WHAT *HAP-PENED!!*

THAT'S WHAT WE TOLD EVERY-ONE!

...WENT TO THE HOSPITAL, WHERE WE CONSULTED WITH A DOCTOR. WE DIDN'T TELL MY DAD ABOUT THIS.

BECAUSE MY DAD WAS BECOMING SO ABNORMAL, MY MOM AND I...

...ANY-WHERE.

...WE COULDN'T FIND HIM...

WE ALL AGREED THAT HE SHOULD BE HOSPITALIZED. WE CAME HOME LATE THAT NIGHT BUT...

THEN...

ZZHHH

WE'D NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE. IT WAS SITTING THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS STUDY.

...WE FOUND THIS LARGE TUB.

I WONDER...

...WHAT THIS IS...

...CRUSHING HIS BODY... THAT'S HOW HE DIED.

HE TURNED HIMSELF INTO A SPIRAL...

...HE PUT HIMSELF INSIDE THAT TUB!!

I DON'T KNOW HOW IT HAPPENED... ALL I KNOW IS THAT...

WHAT IS IT?! UP IN THE SKY!!

LOOK! LOOK AT THAT!!

?!

RIGHT UP THERE, UP IN THE SKY!!

WHAT?! WHERE?!

WHAT IS THAT?!

CHAPTER 2

THE SPIRAL OBSESSION PART 2

YES... FATHER'S ASHES...

SHUICHI ...ARE THEY...

GOD... HOW EERIE...

...A BAD OMEN...

TH-THIS MUST BE...

THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATION...

WH-WHAT IS IT?

IT'S GOING INTO DRAGON-FLY POND!

IT'S SWIRLING DOWN TOWARDS THE WATER!

LOOK! THE SMOKE IS SETTLING!

...IS RIGHT BEHIND OUR HOUSE.

DRAGONFLY POND...

THIS IS JUST TOO STRANGE...

THE POND IN THE CENTER OF TOWN.

GO AWAY!!

PLEASE DEAR, STOP IT!

AIEEEE!

SHUICH!!

MOM! MOM! CALM DOWN!

MRS. SAITO, PLEASE!

EEEEEE!!

B-BUT... LOOK... OVER THERE...

N-NO... THIS IS JUST A COINCI-DENCE.

THAT'S YOUR FATHER...

FOR A SPLIT SECOND THE DRIFTING SMOKE...

...BECAME THE FACE OF SHUICHI'S FATHER...

AAA HA HA...

EEE YAAAA...

IYAAA...

MOM?!

SOME-ONE CALL AN AMBU-LANCE!!

HA HA HA HA HA...

HA HA HA...

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

EEEYO EEEYO

IN THE SKY...

NO... NO...

PLEASE, MRS. SAITO, THE DOCTOR WILL COME SOON.

AAIAA!

NO! NO! DON'T LET HIM NEAR ME!

A SPIRAL !!

AAIEEE!

!

...DE-VELOPED AN EXTREME PHOBIA OF SPIRALS.

AAAIIEEEE

AND SO SHUICHI'S MOTHER ...

SPIRAL! *SPIRAL!* TAKE IT AWAY!

AAAIIIEE!

MRS. SAITO!

SHE SHAVED HER HEAD.

SHE BECAME TERRIFIED OF CURLING HAIR, OR EVEN HER OWN HAIR IN A BUN.

HER PHOBIA WORSENED TO THE POINT WHERE SHE COULDN'T EAT SOLID FOOD...

NO! ANOTHER SPIRAL!!

SHE WAS PUT IN THE HOSPI-TAL.

NO!

AND THEN...

...SHE CUT THE SKIN FROM HER FINGERS AND TOES!

SLIP

...AS SOON AS SHE SAW HER FINGER-PRINTS HAD SPIRALS ...

...MY FATHER WHEN WE FOUND HIS BODY.

TO HER, EVERY SPIRAL LOOKS LIKE...

SHUICHI TOLD ME...

MY MOTHER ...

...COME JOIN ME IN THE SPIRAL.

YUKIE DEAR ...

...AND HE SAYS...

AND HE LOOKS AT HER...

THE DOCTORS AND NURSES ARE BEING CAREFUL TOO.

I WEAR THIS HAT AND GLOVES SO SHE WON'T SEE MY FINGERTIPS OR THE WHORLS IN MY HAIR.

SHE'S COMPLETELY DELUSIONAL...

...SO NOW WE JUST HAVE TO CURE HER OF THIS PHOBIA.

SHE GOT RID OF ALL THE SPIRALS ON HER BODY...

THANKS TO THESE PRECAUTIONS SHE SEEMS TO BE CALMING DOWN.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY, MRS. SAITO?

DIRECTOR

...YES, I AM.

WELL...

ARE YOU STILL AFRAID OF SPIRALS?

PRETTY GOOD, DOCTOR.

THE HUMAN BODY

I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU FOR OBSERVATION TO THE MIDORIYAMA-SHI PSYCHIATRIC WARD.

!!

I SEE.

THEN HOW ABOUT THIS ...

IS SOMETHING WRONG? I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THEM.

SEMICIRCULAR CANALS
CRANIAL NERVES
OSSICLES
MIDDLE EAR CAVITY
COCHLEA
EARDRUM

YOU SHOULDN'T BE AFRAID OF THE STIGMA OF STAYING AT A PSYCHIATRIC WARD.

I-I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT...

SHUICHI ...?

SEMICIRCULAR CANALS
CRANIAL NERVES
OSSICLES
MIDDLE EAR CAVITY
COCHLEA
EARDRUM

THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO FEAR.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, SHUICHI?

...SORRY.

OH...

HUH?!

SHUICHI!

URK

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

SHUICHI?

YOU CAN BE SO STRANGE.

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

IT'S *NOTHING*, DOCTOR!!

OH NO!!

DOES SOMETHING ON THIS WALL BOTHER YOU?

...I DON'T WANT TO GO TO MIDORIYAMA.

THAT WAS WHERE WE WERE GOING TO TAKE YOUR FATHER.

103

Yukie Saito

I... I HAVE TO BE HONEST...

...I WON'T HURT MYSELF ANYMORE.

OF COURSE NOT... BUT...

DON'T YOU WANT TO GET BETTER?

YOU DON'T WANT TO KEEP HURTING YOURSELF, DO YOU?

BUT YOU SHOULD GO WHERE THEY HAVE SPECIAL FACILITIES.

WHOOOOO

...

YEAH... YEAH, THAT'S TRUE.

I TOOK ALL THE SPIRALS OFF MY BODY...

ARRGH... IT'S THE FIVE O'CLOCK SIREN.

WHOOOOO

IT JUST *PIERCES* THROUGH MY EARS!

I **HATE** THAT SOUND!

REALIZE WHAT?

HUH?

...MY MOTHER DOESN'T REALIZE...

KIRIE...

...AND HOPEFULLY SHE NEVER WILL.

BUT THERE'S MORE.

I THOUGHT THAT THE HAIR AND THE FINGERPRINTS WERE THE ONLY SPIRALS ON THE HUMAN BODY...

IT'S PROBABLY THE MOST OBVIOUS SPIRAL IN THE HUMAN BODY.

SA SA

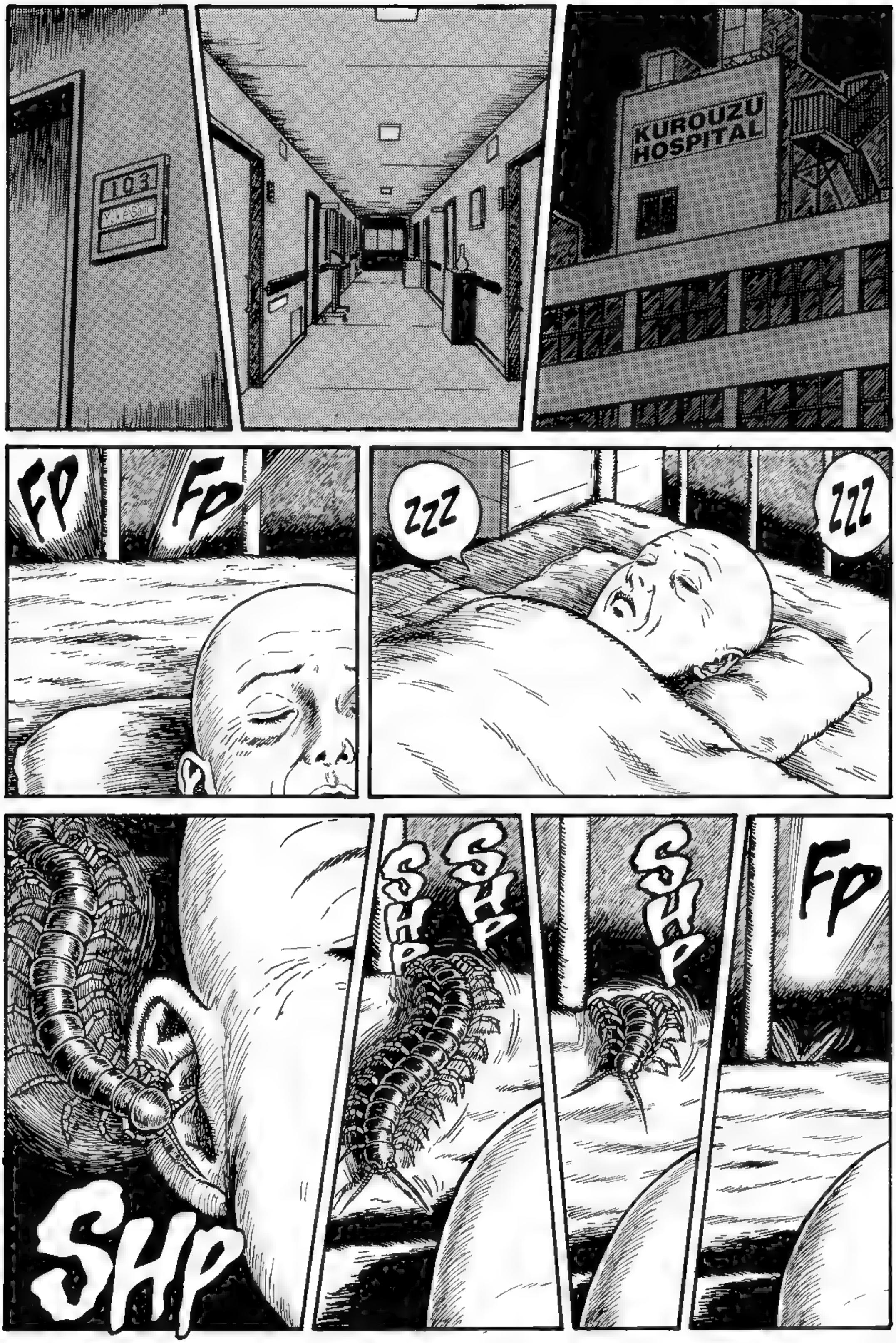
I SAW IT ON THE ANATOMICAL CHART IN THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE.

THERE'S THE SENSOR FOR SOUND, THE COCHLEA IN THE INNER EAR.

...

NO ONE CAN TELL... BUT SHE CUT OFF THE TIPS OF HER FINGERS...

WHAT WILL SHE DO IF SHE FINDS OUT THERE'S A SPIRAL *INSIDE* HER?


103
KUROUZU HOSPITAL
FP
Fp
ZZZ
ZZZ
SHP
SHP
SHP
SHP
Fp

FWISH

HUH?

SHP

HM...

SHP

SHP

AHHH!

PLISH

THUD

NO!!

FWI IC H

FWI IN CH

FWI IC H

AHHH!

...

NO!!

NO...

COME JOIN ME IN THE SPIRAL...

YUKIE DEAR...

YOU STILL HAVE THEM IN YOUR BODY!

WHY DO YOU HATE THE SPIRAL SO?

KYA AAA!

...DEEP INSIDE YOUR EARS...

I WANT TO CURL UP INSIDE YOU AND SLEEP THERE...

I WANT TO CRAWL INTO YOUR EARS SO BADLY...

...ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?

MRS. SAITO...

...

MOTHER, THEY SAID YOU SCREAMED LAST NIGHT...

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

DID SOME-THING HAPPEN?

HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

MRS. SAITO, IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR TEMPERA-TURE.

YES...

WHAT? THE EAR?

...THE HUMAN EAR?

WHAT'S INSIDE...

I WAS WONDERING...

YES?

...THERE'S A SPIRAL.

DON'T TELL ME...

REALLY?

YES.

OF COURSE NOT.

A SPIRAL?

I WANT TO CHECK IT!!

WASN'T THERE AN ANATOMICAL CHART IN THE DIRECTOR'S ROOM?

GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM, MOTHER!

YOUR LEG HASN'T HEALED YET!!

YOU HEARD THE NURSE!! SHE CAN'T BE LYING!!

IS IT REALLY TRUE...

MOTHER!

EMERGENCY EXIT

I WON-DER.

SWKK

DOCTOR!

DIRECTOR

THE DIRECTOR IS A BUSY MAN!

LET ME GO, SHUICHI!

STOP IT, MOTHER!

HEY!!

MOTHER!

LET ME SEE YOUR ANATOM-ICAL CHARTS!

...IS THERE A SPIRAL IN THE HUMAN EAR?

TH-THEN LET ME ASK YOU...

WHERE'S THE ONE THAT WAS HERE?

D-DOCTOR!

WHAT!?

OH... THAT WAS OUTDATED SO I THREW IT OUT.

I'M SORRY, MRS. SAITO, BUT...

...THAT'S THE ONLY ONE I HAD.

THEN GIVE ME PROOF...

REALLY ?

SHOW ME ANOTHER CHART!

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A THING.

A SPIRAL IN THE EAR?

CHAK

I NEED TO LOOK!

...IN ONE OF THESE BOOKS!

YOU'RE LYING... DON'T TELL ME THERE ISN'T A SINGLE CHART...

THAT'S ENOUGH !!

MOTHER !!

WHAP

...YOUR FATHER SAID SOMETHING VERY STRANGE...

...ABOUT MY EARS.

BUT SHUICHI... LAST NIGHT...

LOOK WHAT YOU'RE DOING! THE DOCTOR TOLD YOU THERE ISN'T, OKAY?

YOU WERE *DREAMING!*

DAD IS DEAD!

THANK YOU, DOCTOR.

GOOD THING I TOOK THE CHART DOWN.

A-ALL RIGHT ...

DIRECTOR

LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM...

OTHER-WISE, AS YOU SAID, SHE'S IN DANGER.

WE NEED TO HAVE A SPECIALIST TREAT HER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

AS THE DIRECTOR SAID, TOMORROW YOU'LL BE TRANSFERRED TO MIDORIYAMA-SHI...

SO GET SOME REST TONIGHT, OKAY?

MRS. SAITO, THIS IS YOUR LAST NIGHT ON IV...

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

CHUD

THANK YOU... GOOD NIGHT.

GOOD NIGHT.

NO...
NO!
OH...
CHRRRRRRRRRRRRR
NO!

THERE ARE...

...SPIRALS...

AHH... AHH...

BLUP

...IN YOUR EARS...

THERE ARE SPIRALS...

DWING

EEY AAA!!

RIPP

KARASH

TUP!

EEE YAAA !!

HE SLID INTO THE SPIRALS IN MY EARS!

HE'S IN MY EARS...

...IN YOUR EARS.

THERE ARE SPIRALS...

HE'S IN MY EARS!

I CAN STILL *HEAR HIM!*

GR IP

I'LL GET THEM OUT!

RUSTLE RUSTLE

NO... NO!

AHH...

HH...

AAAA

AS A RESULT, SHE WAS IN A CONSTANT STATE OF VERTIGO...

BY STABBING HER EARS, SHE DESTROYED NOT ONLY HER HEARING BUT HER SENSE OF BALANCE.

I DON'T WANT TO BECOME A SPIRAL!

NO!

MY BODY... SPIRAL...

AAAH! I'M SPINNING!

SHUICHI'S MOTHER WAS HAUNTED BY SPIRALS UNTIL THE MOMENT SHE DIED.

...ANOTHER BLACK SPIRAL... EMERGED IN THE SKY ABOVE OUR TOWN.

ON THE DAY OF HER FUNERAL, AS HER BODY WAS BURNED...

CHAPTER
3

THE SCAR

SHE COMMUTED TO SCHOOL FROM MIDORIYAMA-SHI.

...I MADE FRIENDS WITH AZAMI KUROTANI.

WHEN I STARTED GOING TO KUROUZU HIGH SCHOOL...

IF I HADN'T, SHE WOULD NEVER HAVE MET SHUICHI...

BUT NOW I REGRET EVER MEETING HER.

...AND WE MIGHT HAVE PREVENTED WHAT HAPPENED.

SHE WAS ONE OF THOSE PRETTY, RESERVED GIRLS.

TUP

TH-THIS IS FOR YOU...

FROM THE DAY SHE STARTED SCHOOL, SHE WAS ALWAYS SUR-ROUNDED BY GUYS.

YOU'RE SO POPULAR.

NO I'M NOT.

CHIRP

LET'S GO, KIRIE.

HEY, WANNA GO FOR A RIDE?

OH, COME ON... YOU'RE SO PRETTY.

SHE WAS GOOD AT GIVING THE COLD SHOULDER.

EAT ME, BITCH!

SHE WAS OBVIOUSLY USED TO IT.

AS TIME WENT ON, A RUMOR STARTED GOING AROUND.

WHY NOT?

YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T, Y'KNOW.

UH... YEAH...

KIRIE, ARE YOU STILL HANGING OUT WITH AZAMI?

MAGIC POWER?

THEY SAY SHE'S GOT A MAGIC POWER.

SHE USES HER LOOKS TO GET GUYS...

SHE'S GOT A BAD REPUTA-TION.

SHE GETS THEM OBSESSED ...AND THEN DUMPS THEM.

...

YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL OR SHE'LL END UP STEALING YOUR BOYFRIEND.

THEY SAY THAT'S THE SOURCE OF HER POWER.

DONNNG

YOU CAN'T TELL BECAUSE OF HER BANGS, BUT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE A SCAR THERE.

DONNNG

THE SECRET'S ON HER FOREHEAD.

YEAH, TO ATTRACT BOYS...

LET'S GO BACK TO THE CLASS-ROOM.

KIRIE, THE BELL RANG.

S-SURE, AZAMI.

SPLASH SPLASH

THAT FELT GOOD.

AHH...

...THIS SCAR.

OH...

...

UH...

WHAT'S WRONG, KIRIE?

OF COURSE I DON'T.

OH...

THEY'RE JUST IDIOTS... DON'T BELIEVE THEM.

THEY WERE TALKING TO YOU ABOUT IT, WEREN'T THEY?

...SO I TRIED WALKING ON THE ROPES IN THE PLAYGROUND. I FELL, AND THAT'S HOW I GOT THIS SCAR.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, THERE WAS THIS BOY I HAD A CRUSH ON. I WANTED TO IMPRESS HIM...

HEY, GET DOWN HERE!

IT'S TRUE, THOUGH, THAT THIS SCAR MEANS SOMETHING TO ME.

...THIS SCAR REALLY DOES HAVE THE POWER TO ATTRACT BOYS.

SO I DO WONDER AT TIMES IF...

I TOLD YOU SO! YOU *OKAY?*

I'LL GO GET THE TEACH-ER!

THE FUNNY THING IS, WE BECAME FRIENDS BECAUSE OF THAT.

WAAH!

...

BUT OF COURSE IT'S JUST A COINCI-DENCE. NO ONE HAS THAT KIND OF POWER!

EVER SINCE I GOT IT, I'VE HAD EVERY BOY I EVER LIKED.

KIRIE, WAIT!

HUH?

OHH! IT'S YOUR BOY-FRIEND, RIGHT?!

I'M SORRY... TODAY I HAVE TO GO SEE SOME-BODY.

AREN'T WE GOING TO WALK TOGETHER ?

BUT...

A-ALL RIGHT ...IF YOU WANT TO...

I MIGHT HAVE SEEN HIM AT THE STATION WITHOUT KNOWING IT!

I KNEW IT! SHUICHI SAITO! DOESN'T HE GO TO MIDORIYAMA HIGH SCHOOL?

BUT WHAT?

WHAT'S HE LIKE? WHY DON'T YOU INTRODUCE HIM TO ME? I WANT TO MEET HIM RIGHT NOW!

HE LOST BOTH HIS PARENTS RECENTLY...

OH...!

HE HAD A HORRIBLE EXPERI-ENCE...

BUT SHE INSISTED ON IT, SO I GAVE IN.

I WAS RELUCTANT TO LET HER MEET SHUICHI.

REALLY? WHY?

HE HASN'T BEEN GOING TO SCHOOL LATELY.

CHAK

SHUICHI, ARE YOU HERE?

HELLO!

HEY...

SSHHH

SHUICHI, THIS IS MY CLASSMATE, AZAMI KUROTANI.

COME ON IN...

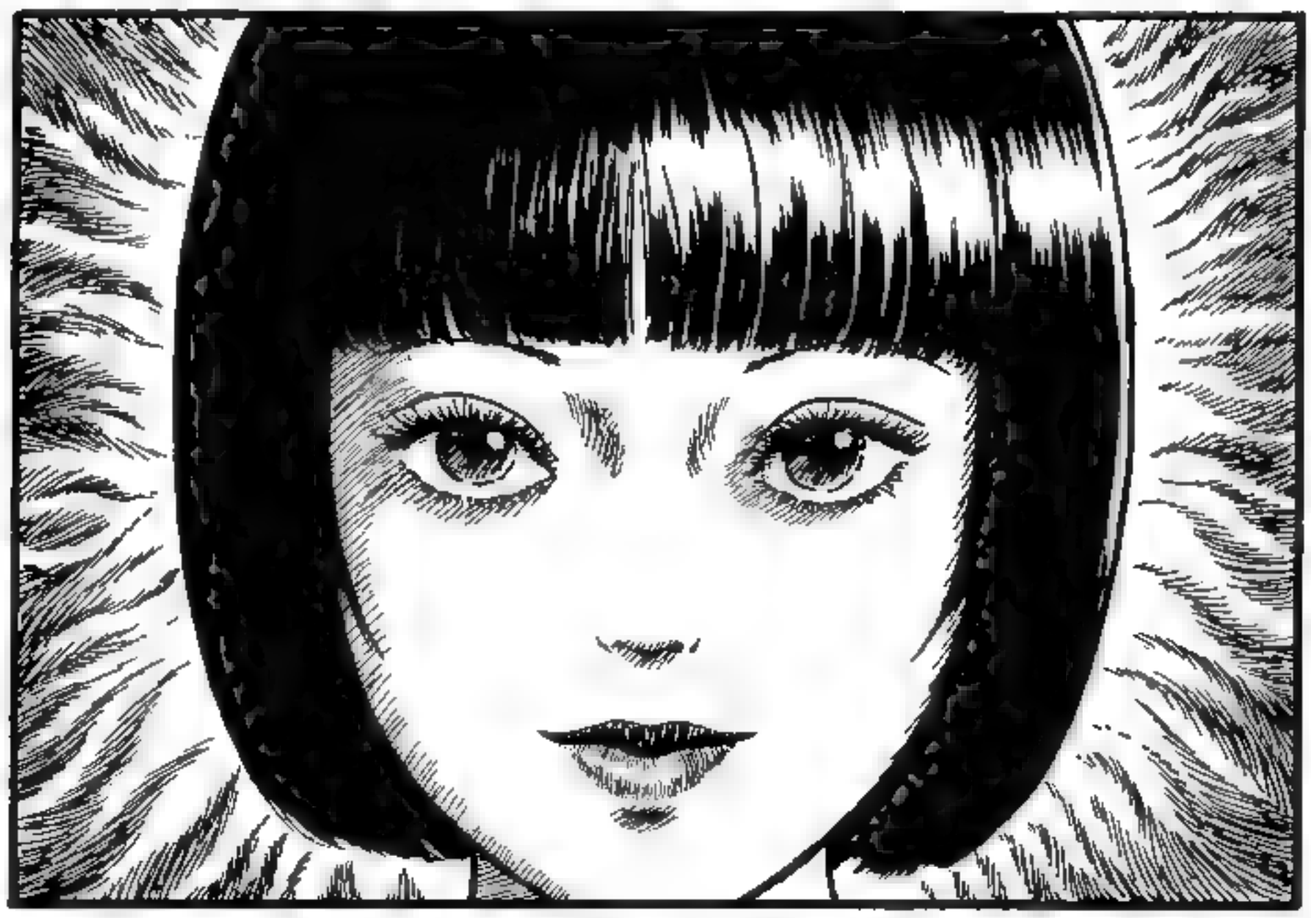
CALL ME AZAMI.

HELLO.

HELLO.

HUH ?!

UR...



G-GO AWAY!

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI ?

...!!

AND DON'T EVER COME AGAIN!

GO AWAY!

I-IT'S YOU!

OH... DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

HE SEEMED STRESSED.

I'M SORRY, AZAMI... HE'S BEEN SO STRANGE LATELY.

...AND HARDLY SAID A WORD ON OUR WAY HOME.

BUT SHE LOOKED PALE...

YOU SHOCKED AZAMI.

WHY'D YOU TREAT HER LIKE THAT?

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH YOU TODAY?

HELLO, SHUICHI?

IT'S ME, KIRIE.

IT'S LIKE LOOKING DOWN FROM A HIGH PLACE...

THERE'S SOMETHING MESMERIZING ABOUT HER.

WHAT ?

KIRIE, YOU DON'T FEEL IT?

YOU HAVE TO WATCH OUT. SHE'S A SPIRAL!

IT'S LIKE LOOKING INTO A SPIRAL!

...LIKE VERTIGO...

SHUICHI ?

SHE'S CONTAMINATED BY THE SPIRAL!

SHE'S A SPIRAL ...

SPIRAL ...

SLAM

DING

HUH?

DING DING

WHO COULD IT BE AT THIS HOUR?

SHH

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

AAAHH!

WHAT IS IT ABOUT ME THAT YOU DON'T LIKE?

YOU'RE THE FIRST BOY I'VE EVER MET WHO'S TREATED ME LIKE THIS.

HOW COULD YOU REJECT ME?

EVERY BOY I'VE EVER MET HAS FALLEN FOR ME.

GET OUT OF KUROUZU-CHO!

JUST GO AWAY!

I WILL NOT.

Y-YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING ON YOUR FOREHEAD!

THERE !

...

WHY?

IT'S A SPIRAL! I CAN FEEL IT!

NO, IT'S NOT A SCAR!

YOU MEAN MY SCAR?

FORE-HEAD?

SO KIRIE TOLD YOU?

SEE?

THANKS TO THIS SCAR, I'VE NEVER HAD PROBLEMS WITH LOVE!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S A CRESCENT-SHAPED SCAR...

IT'S NO CRESCENT! IT'S A SPIRAL!

I KNEW IT!

LOOK IN THE MIRROR BY THE ENTRANCE !!

I DON'T ...

WHAT ?

WH...

THIS TOWN IS CONTAMI-NATED WITH SPIRALS!

IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF THIS PLACE... KUROUZU-CHO!

GO TO SCHOOL IN MIDORIYAMA-SHI! GET OUT OF TOWN AS FAST AS YOU CAN!

MAYBE IT USED TO BE SHAPED LIKE A CRESCENT ...

...BUT THEN THE ENDS STARTED GROWING AND FORMED THAT SPIRAL.

...AZAMI KUROTANI TALKED HER PARENTS INTO RENTING AN APARTMENT FOR HER IN KUROUZU-CHO.

INSTEAD OF HEEDING SHUICHI'S WARNING...

BUT NOW I KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT *YOU!*

PLEASE! I'VE NEVER FELT THIS WAY BEFORE! ALL THE BOYS I KNEW COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT ME!

SHUICHI! OPEN THE DOOR!

BAM

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, SHE VISITED HIM...

I'LL MAKE HIM CARE ABOUT ME!

I WON'T! I LIKE HIM *TOO!*

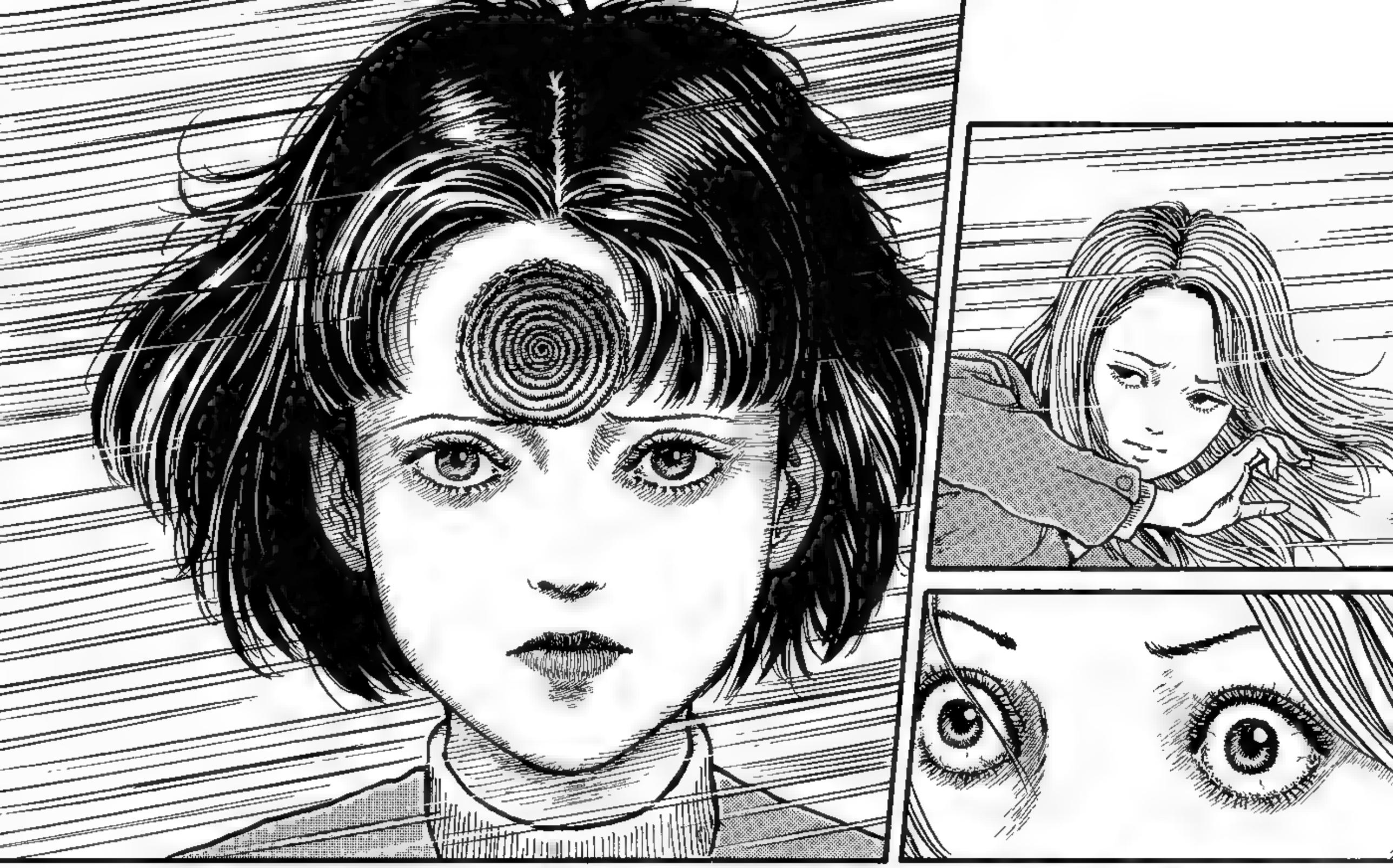
HE DOESN'T WANT YOU AROUND. BESIDES, HE'S MY BOYFRIEND.

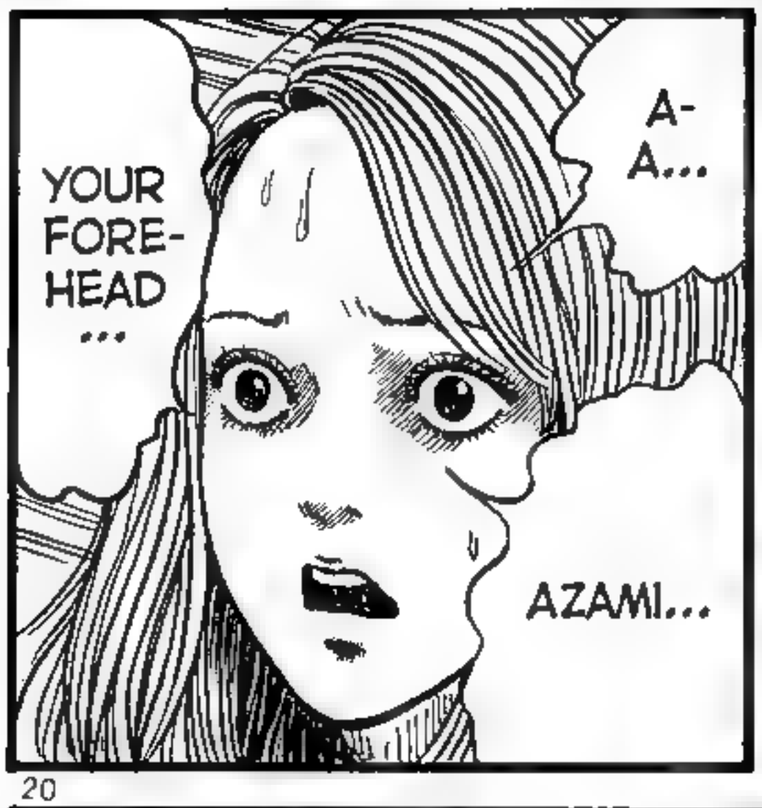
AZAMI... I DON'T WANT YOU VISITING SHUICHI ANYMORE!

WEEOOOO

...

AAHH!




YOUR FORE-HEAD ...
A- A...
AZAMI...

STOP!!
AZAMI!

FSH

AZAMI!

hff

hff

AZAMI!

PLEASE GO OUT WITH ME.

LEAVE ME ALONE! I TOLD YOU, NO!

IT'S ME, OKADA FROM CLASS C.

I HAVE TO BE NEAR YOU. I CAN'T HELP IT. IT'S LIKE I'M BEING SUCKED IN...

I KNOW YOU DID... BUT I'M SO DRAWN TO YOU...

I STOPPED BY HER STUDENT APARTMENT, BUT NO ONE ANSWERED THE DOOR.

AZAMI STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY.

IT LOOKED LIKE A SPIRAL DIGGING INTO HER SKULL.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HER FORE-HEAD?

I COULD TELL SHE WAS IN HER ROOM THOUGH.

THEN ...

...SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

I MUST'VE BEEN HALLUCI-NATING...

BUT HOW CAN THAT BE?

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE NAMED OKADA?

KIRIE, IT'S ME.

HELLO?

SHU-ICHI?

RRRING

RING

SAYS HE WANTS TO TALK TO ME ABOUT YOU.

HE'S MEETING ME AT THE PARK.

I SEE... HE JUST CALLED ME.

OKADA? NO, WHO IS HE?

CLICK

HEY...

ALL RIGHT THEN.

I SEE.

WHAT? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS...

SOUNDS LIKE HE HAS A CRUSH ON YOU.

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

THIS PARK MUST BE THE ONE.

MAYBE MY FATHER SHOULD HAVE COME WITH ME.

IT'S YOU, RIGHT?

AZAMI!

...THAT MUST BE AZAMI. WHY IS SHE HERE?

WHY, THAT...

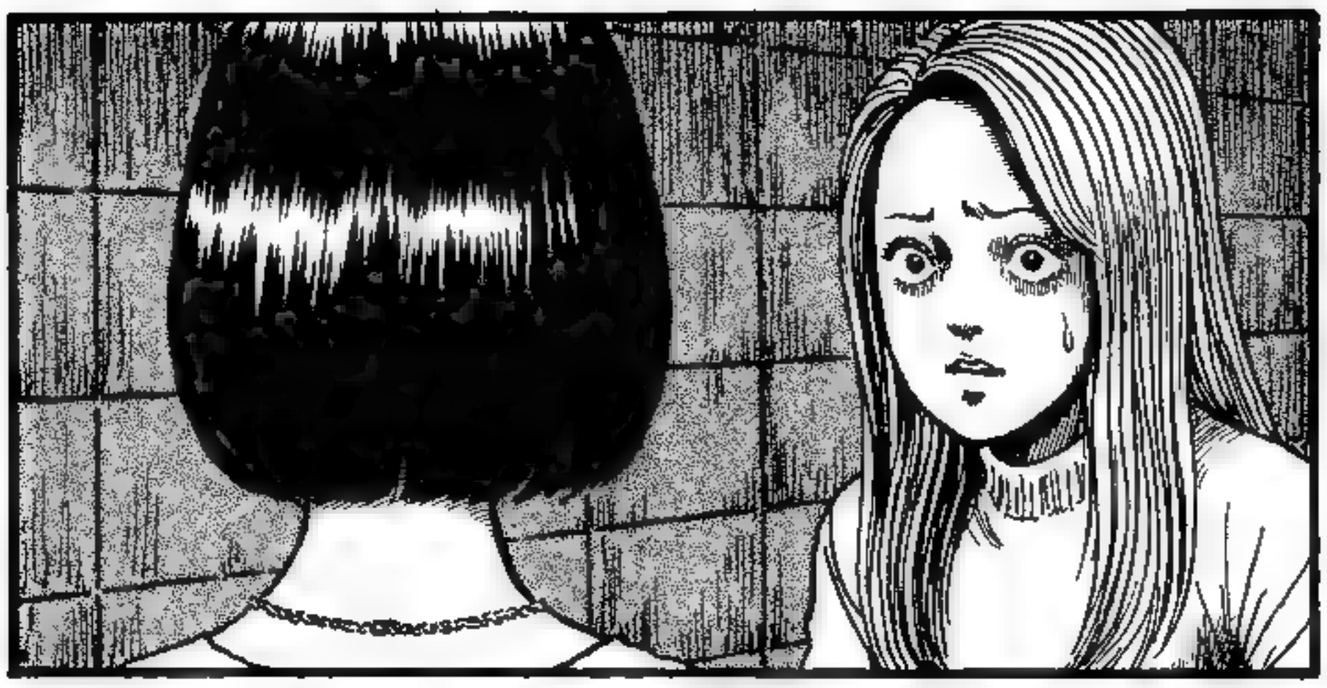
CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK?

...I CAN'T SEEM TO FOCUS ...

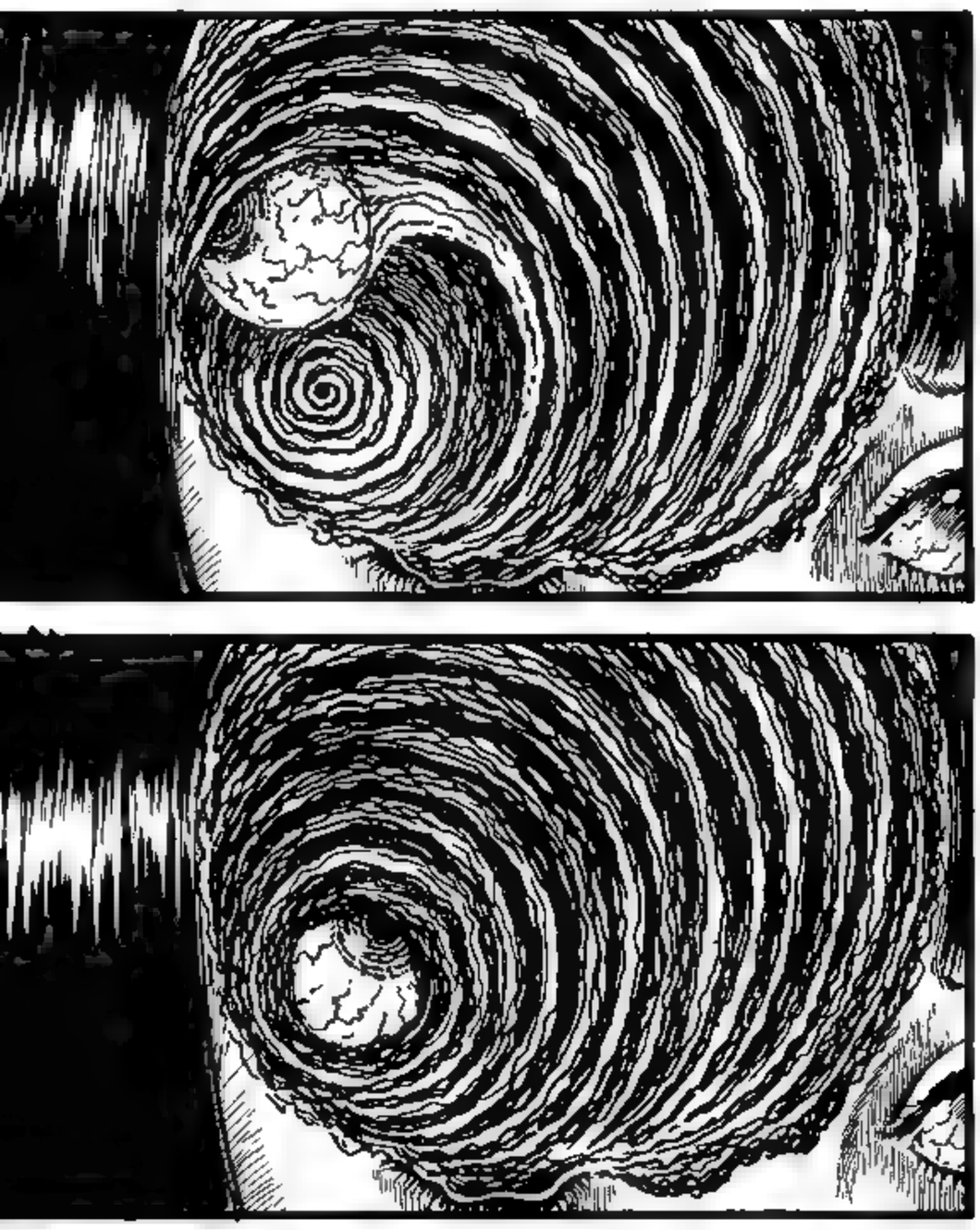
KIRIE... I FEEL STRANGE ...MY RIGHT EYE...

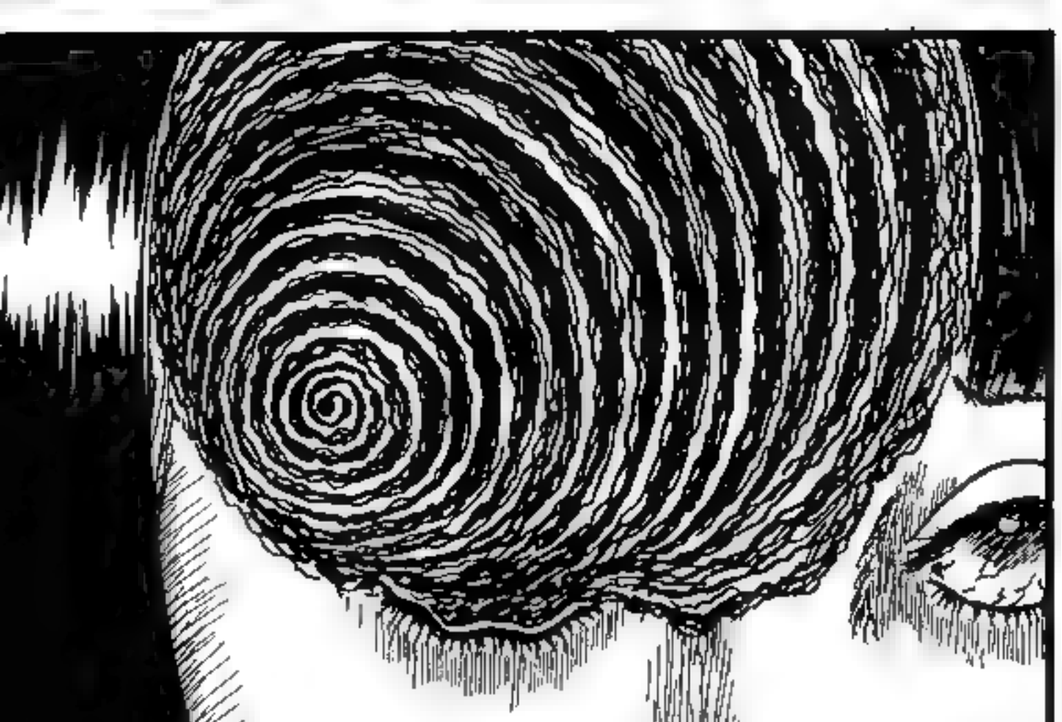
I KNEW IT!

WHAT'S GOING ON? I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU!



ERR





SLLMP

AAA

SEE... HERE SHE COMES.

NO.

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

...

SHE'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE.

JUST HOLD ON...

WHO? KIRIE?

NOW YOU'LL GO OUT WITH ME, RIGHT?

ALL RIGHT, I BROUGHT SHUICHI SAITO LIKE YOU ASKED.

GO HOME.

NO, I HAVE NO USE FOR YOU ANY-MORE.

WH-

WHAT ?!

I JUST WANTED TO SEE SHUICHI.

HA HA... I DON'T CARE ABOUT MY PROMISES.

YOU SAID IF I BROUGHT HIM YOU'D GO OUT WITH ME!

WH-WHAT? BUT YOU PROMISED!

FLAP

YOU BITCH! YOU LIED TO ME!

A-
AZAMI.

...WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOU?

WH...

HEE
HEE
HEE
HEE

HEE...

HEE
HEE
HEE
HEE
...

I-IS THAT... BONE?

SHEE

OOO

KYEEEA

HUH?

AAGGH!

CAN YOU HEAR ME ?!

WHERE ARE YOU?

WHO WAS THAT?

SHUICHI ?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?

OKADA JUST GOT SUCKED IN!

KIRIE!

OVER HERE!

NOW SHE'S GOING TO VANISH TOO!

HE'S GONE!

WHAT?!

LOOK!

SHE'S BEING CONSUMED BY THE SPIRAL THAT APPEARED ON HER BODY!!

LOOK!

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING!

...WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE BEHIND.

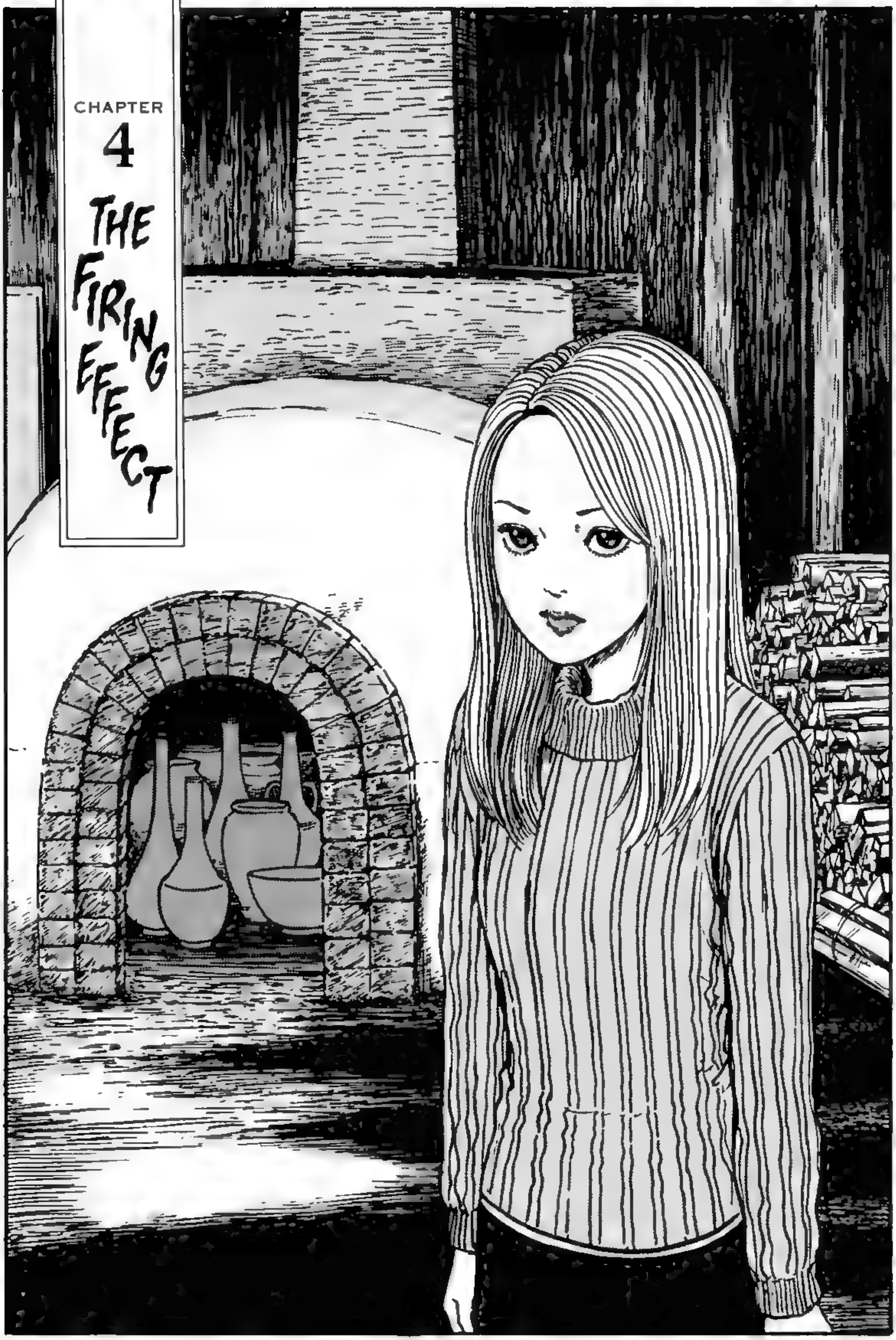
AZAMI KUROTANI WAS DEVOURED FROM HEAD TO TOE...

SHEEOO

CHAPTER

4

THE FIRING EFFECT



EVER SINCE SHUICHI'S DAD'S FUNERAL, THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATORIUM HAS MADE THESE SPIRALS IN THE AIR...

YES...

LOOK, THEY HAD ANOTHER CREMATION.

HEY, KIRIE.

SOON IT'LL FALL INTO DRAGONFLY POND.

LOOK, MITSUO...

SEE?

IT'S FALLING SLOWLY ...

...AS IF...

...THE POND IS SUCKING IT IN...

WHERE IS YOUR FATHER?

HE'S TENDING THE KILN IN THE COTTAGE. I THINK HE WAS UP ALL NIGHT.

KIRIE, MITSUO...

STOP STARING AT THAT AWFUL THING AND COME INSIDE.

MOM ...

ROARRR

ROARRRR

THIS CAN'T BE...

BUT ...

I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS.

NO... IT'S ALL RIGHT.

WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO TAKE OVER?

DEAR?

BUT...

DON'T LOOK INSIDE THE KILN!

JUST GO BACK TO THE HOUSE!

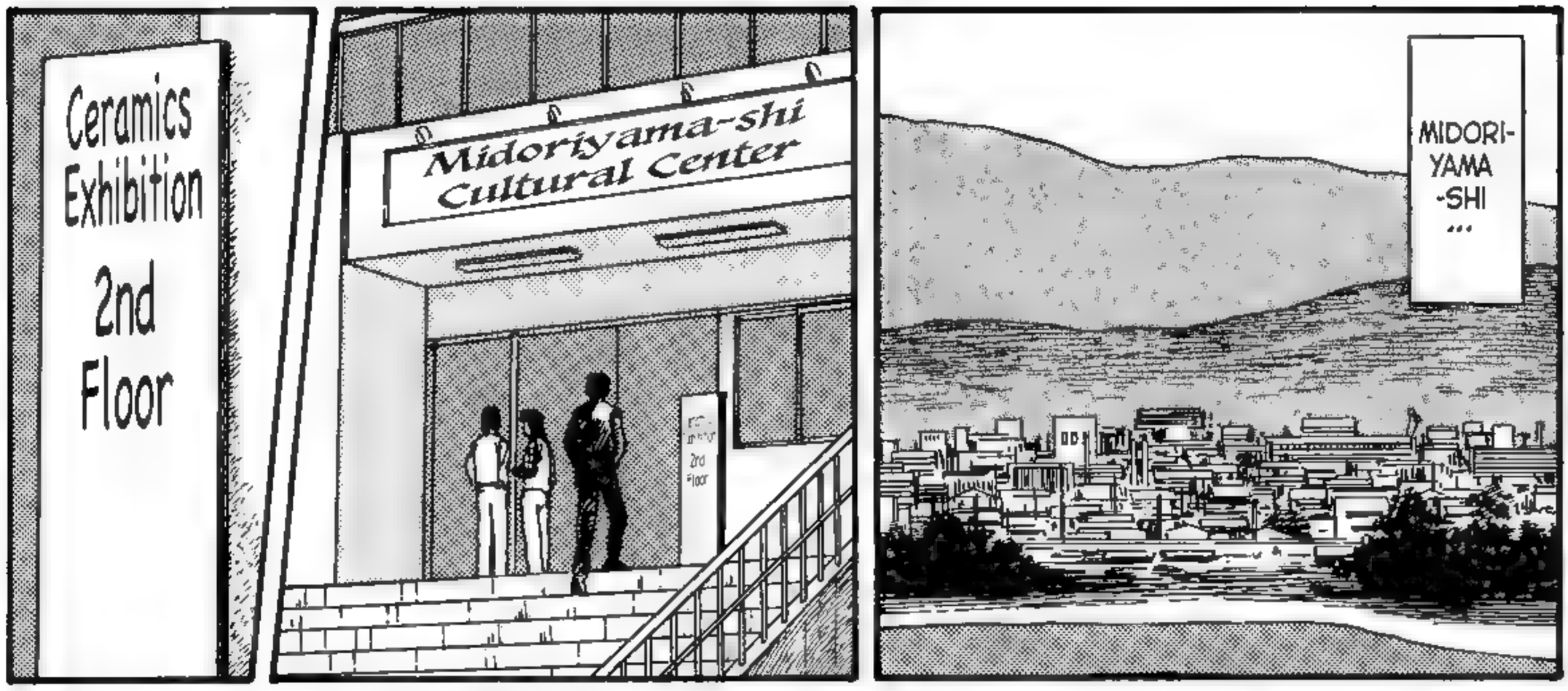
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE FIRE?

YOU'LL GET SICK IF YOU DON'T GET SOME REST SOON.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOUR FATHER'S ACTING STRANGE.

EVEN THE SMOKE FROM FATHER'S KILN IS SWIRLING!

L-LOOK!


Ceramics Exhibition
2nd Floor
Midoriyama-shi Cultural Center
3rd Floor
MIDORI-YAMA -SHI ...

YES, THEY'RE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM YOUR PREVIOUS STYLE.
MR. GOSHIMA, YOUR SUBMISSIONS THIS TIME ARE VERY ODD.
INTER-ESTING...
HMM...

...BUT AS SOON AS I PUT THEM IN THE KILN THEY BECAME RADICALLY MELTED AND DEFORMED.

I'M EMBARRASSED. THEY WERE ALL NORMAL POTS AND PLATES...

I USED A NEW CLAY, SO I SUPPOSE THE TEMPERATURE WASN'T RIGHT.

THE SUBLIME COLORS, THE SPIRAL PATTERNS, THE ORGANIC SHAPES...

I SEE. THEY DO HAVE A LIFE OF THEIR OWN...

BUT I BELIEVE THEY'RE QUITE SUCCESSFUL AS WORKS OF ART.

BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN IT CREATE SPIRALS.

YES, "THE FIRING EFFECT"!

THEY WERE FORMED NATURALLY IN THE KILN.

SOME KIND OF CHEMICAL REACTION MUST HAVE OCCURRED DURING THE FIRING.

OH, I DIDN'T DO THAT.

I'D PREFER TO KEEP THAT A SECRET.

HEH HEH HEH...

...WHAT KIND OF NEW CLAY DID YOU USE?

BY THE WAY...

WELL, IT'S NOT SURPRISING. I MEAN, THIS STUFF ISN'T VERY PRACTICAL.

THEY DON'T KNOW ART WHEN THEY SEE IT.

THEY LOOK WEIRD TOO.

SO...

...YOU DIDN'T SELL A SINGLE PIECE?

I DON'T KNOW.

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY-THING LIKE THIS.

HOW COULD THESE PATTERNS FORM NATURALLY?

YOU'RE SUCH A HARSH CRITIC, KIRIE.

WHERE, WHERE?

WHAT?

THERE'S A PERSON'S FACE ON THIS ONE!

HEY, WHAT'S THIS?

SEE WHAT I MEAN?

SEE?

OH NO...

HUH?

AND OVER HERE, TOO!

THIS FACE...

IT LOOKS LIKE A WOMAN!

UH...

...SHU-ICHI'S MOTHER AND FATHER?

DON'T YOU THINK THEY LOOK LIKE...

DAD...

MOM...

I DON'T KNOW. IT MUST BE A COINCIDENCE.

DEAR, WHAT IS THIS?

THIS IS HORRI-BLE.

THEY *DO* LOOK LIKE THEM!

Y-YOU'RE RIGHT!

DON'T YOU THINK SO, MOM?

OH, PLEASE...

EACH HAD BEEN CREMATED IN KUROUZU-CHO.

THEIR SMOKE AND ASH HAD FORMED THE SPIRALS...

THERE WERE FOUR FACES IN ALL.

THE TWO NEW FACES WERE IDENTIFIED AS CITIZENS WHO HAD RECENTLY DIED.

BUT I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING!

HOW COULD YOU MAKE SOMETHING SO *VICIOUS?*

HERE'S ANOTHER ONE!

HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

WHAT'S GOING ON, DAD? WHY WOULD THEIR FACES APPEAR ON YOUR POTTERY?

...

...CERAMICS ARE MADE FROM EARTH AND FIRE. IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S THE WORK OF NATURE. WE TRY OUR BEST...

...WITH HUMAN HANDS, BUT SOMETIMES NATURE CAN CREATE THINGS BEYOND OUR IMAGINATION. AFTER ALL, MOST SHAPES ARE REALLY PATTERNS, BUT WE CAN ONLY SEE A PIECE OF THEM AT A TIME...

I DON'T REALLY KNOW, BUT...

NO. AND I DON'T THINK HE'S BEEN EATING PROPERLY.

SO IS SHUICHI STILL NOT GOING TO SCHOOL?

YOU SHUT UP.

YOU STILL MAKING LUNCH FOR THAT WEIRDO?

HURRY UP AND GO TO SCHOOL.

WELL ...

OKAY.

BUT HE HAS TO EAT A BIG, HEALTHY MEAL ONCE IN A WHILE.

WHY DON'T WE HAVE HIM OVER FOR DINNER? YOUR FATHER WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIM TOO.

THAT'S WHY I'M DOING THIS FOR HIM.

I HAVE TO! OTHER-WISE YOU WON'T GO OUT!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PULL ME, KIRIE!

IT'S NOT YOU! YOU LIVE NEXT TO DRAGON-FLY POND!

BUT I DON'T WANT TO GO TO YOUR HOUSE!

YOU'LL DIE OF MALNUTRITION LIVING LIKE YOU DO!

JUST THE SAME, I FORCED HIM TO COME OVER.

YES. THAT POND IS INFESTED WITH SPIRALS.

DRAGON-FLY POND?

...

...MRS. GOSHIMA.

GULP

THANK YOU...

SHUICHI, PLEASE EAT ALL YOU WANT.

YOU SHOULD COME OVER MORE OFTEN.

MY...YOU MUST BE REALLY HUNGRY.

SHF SHF

?!

SHLP

SHLP

SHLPSHLP

YES, SIR.

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?

KANG

ARGH!

IT'S...

OH!

WHAT ?!

TH-THAT PLATE! IT'S...

DAD, THIS IS ONE OF THE PLATES YOU JUST MADE!

WHAT'S IT DOING ON THE TABLE?!

I GET DIZZY JUST LOOKING AT IT!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT PLATE?

I THOUGHT SHUICHI, IF ANYONE, WOULD LIKE IT.

TWISTED? IT'S A WORK OF ART.

WHAT?! HOW COULD YOU GIVE HIM THAT TWISTED THING?

WELL, THAT PLATE WAS FLAT ENOUGH TO EAT ON, SO I BROUGHT IT OUT ESPECIALLY FOR SHUICHI.

...AND THIS IS THE WORK I CAME UP WITH!

HE WAS A HUGE INFLUENCE. BEING AN ARTIST, NOT JUST A CRAFTSMAN. I EXPERIMENTED BY TRIAL AND ERROR AND FINALLY I FOUND THE MOST AMAZING CLAY...

I STILL REMEMBER WHEN HE TOLD ME "CERAMICS IS THE ART OF THE SPIRAL."

BECAUSE YOUR FATHER UNDER-STOOD ART.

DRAGONFLY POND?

DR-

...

DRAGONFLY POND.

WHERE DID THIS CLAY COME FROM?

S-SIR...

SHUICHI!

I-I'M SORRY! PLEASE EXCUSE ME!

THAT'S RIGHT. I DREDGED IT UP FROM THERE.

FATHER, YOU USED THE MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND?

URGH!

THAT CLAY MIGHT BE MADE OF DEAD PEOPLE!

I WOULDN'T EAT OFF A PLATE THAT WAS MADE FROM MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND!

BUT DEAR...

AFTER ALL...

...IT'S JUST A PLATE.

I FEEL BAD ABOUT SHUICHI, BUT DON'T YOU THINK HE'S OVERREACTING?

...KEPT DIGGING CLAY FROM DRAGON-FLY POND.

AND WITHOUT HESITATING, MY FATHER...

SPLEL

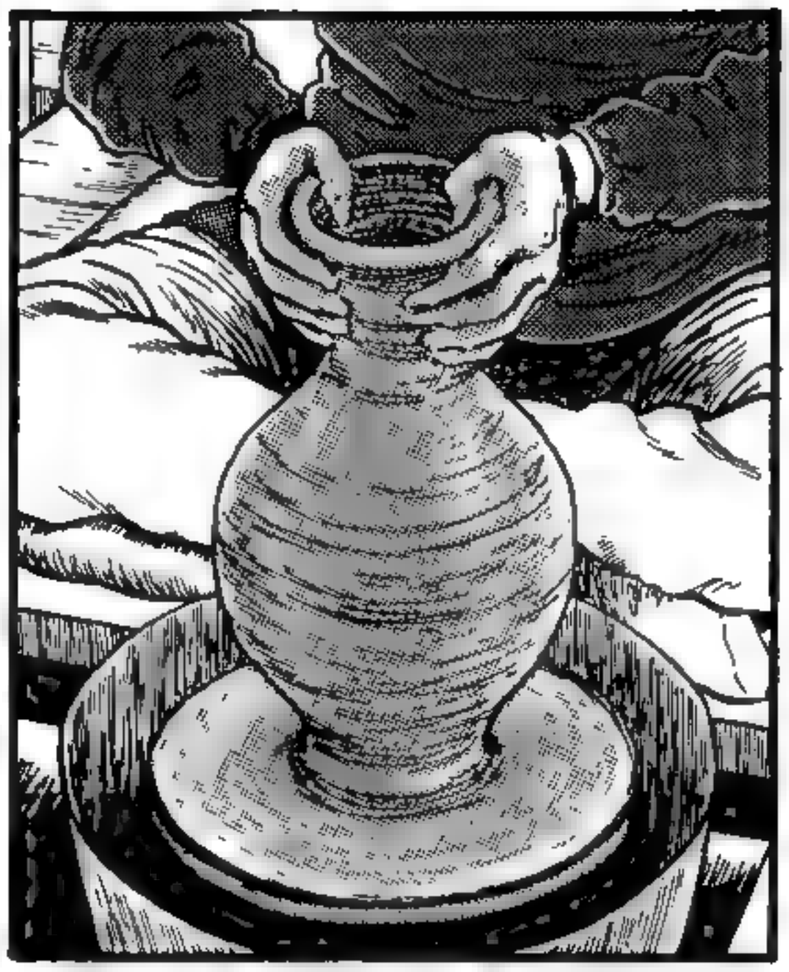
plup

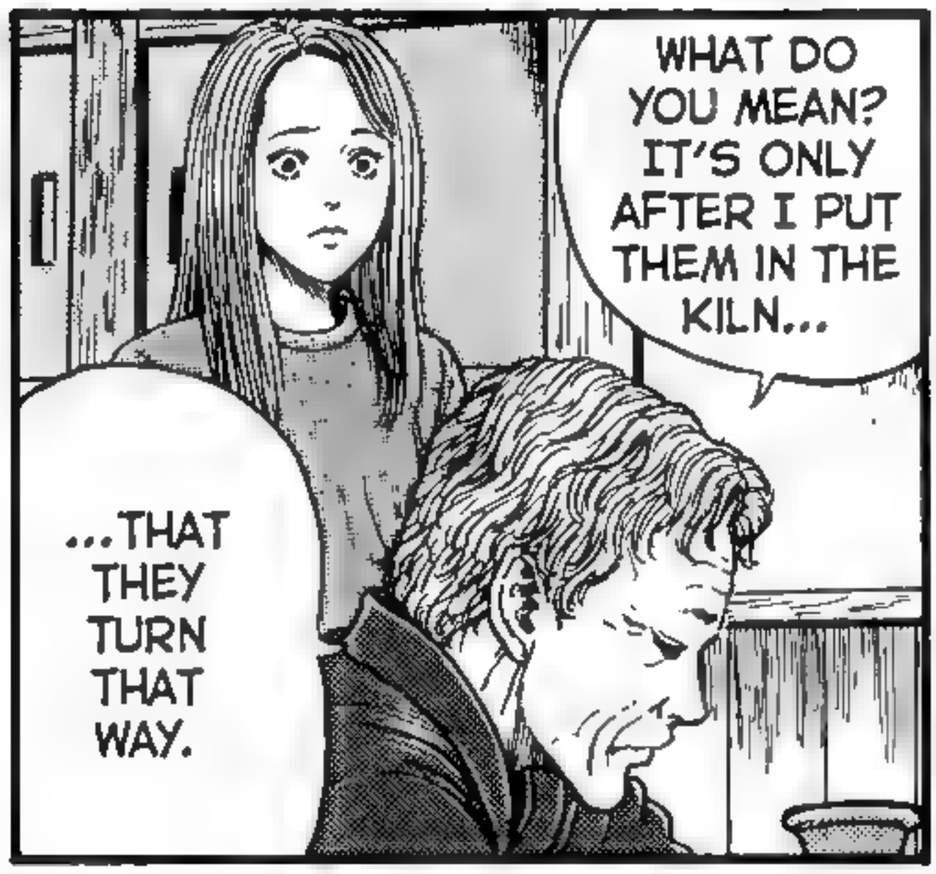
GLUG GLUG

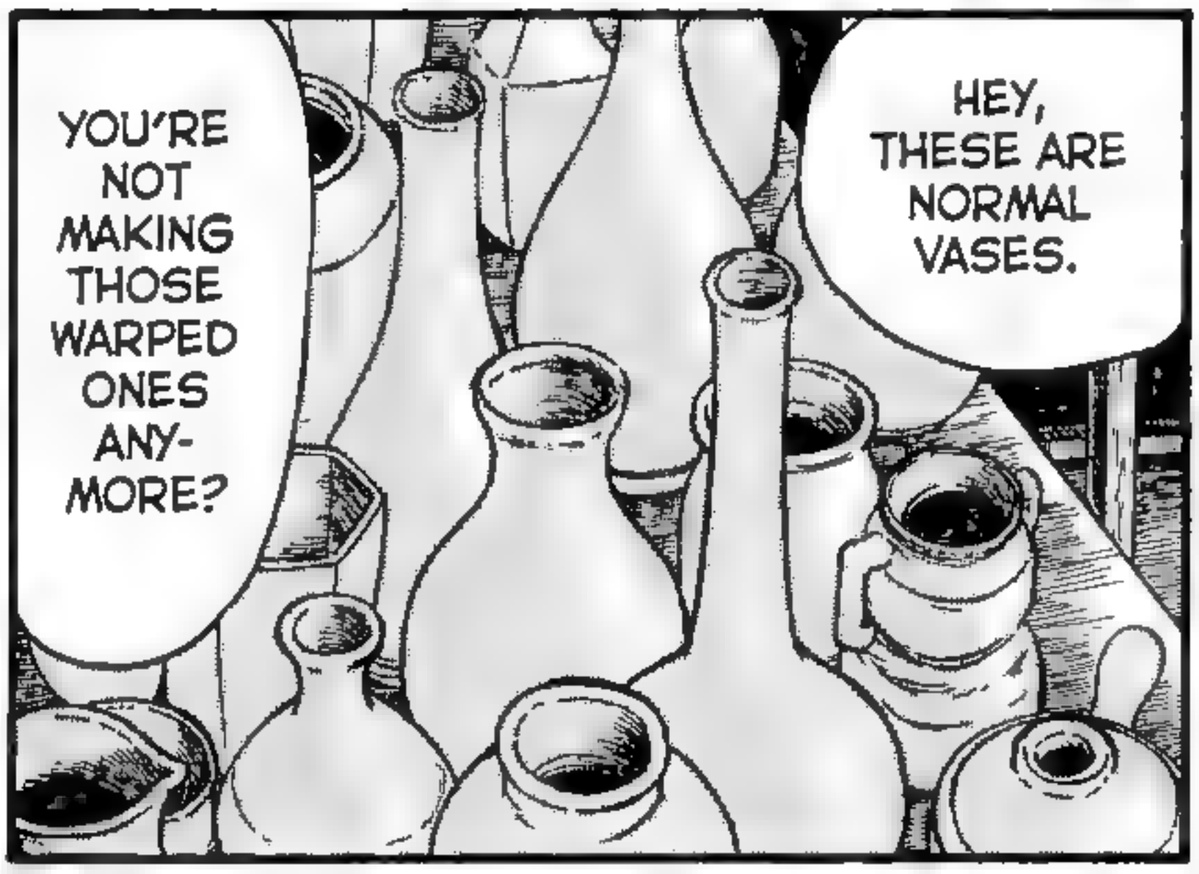
...

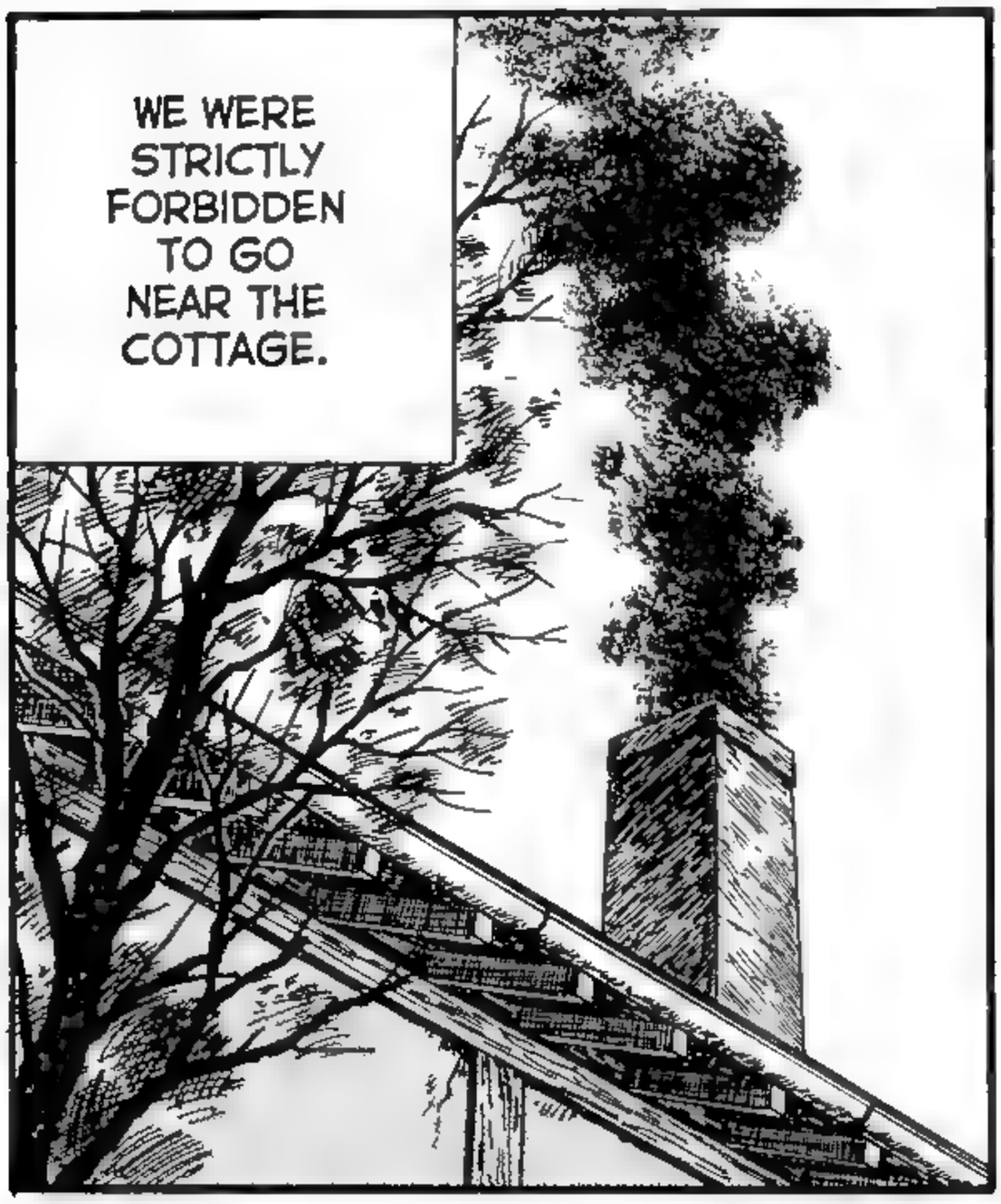
WHOO HA HA!

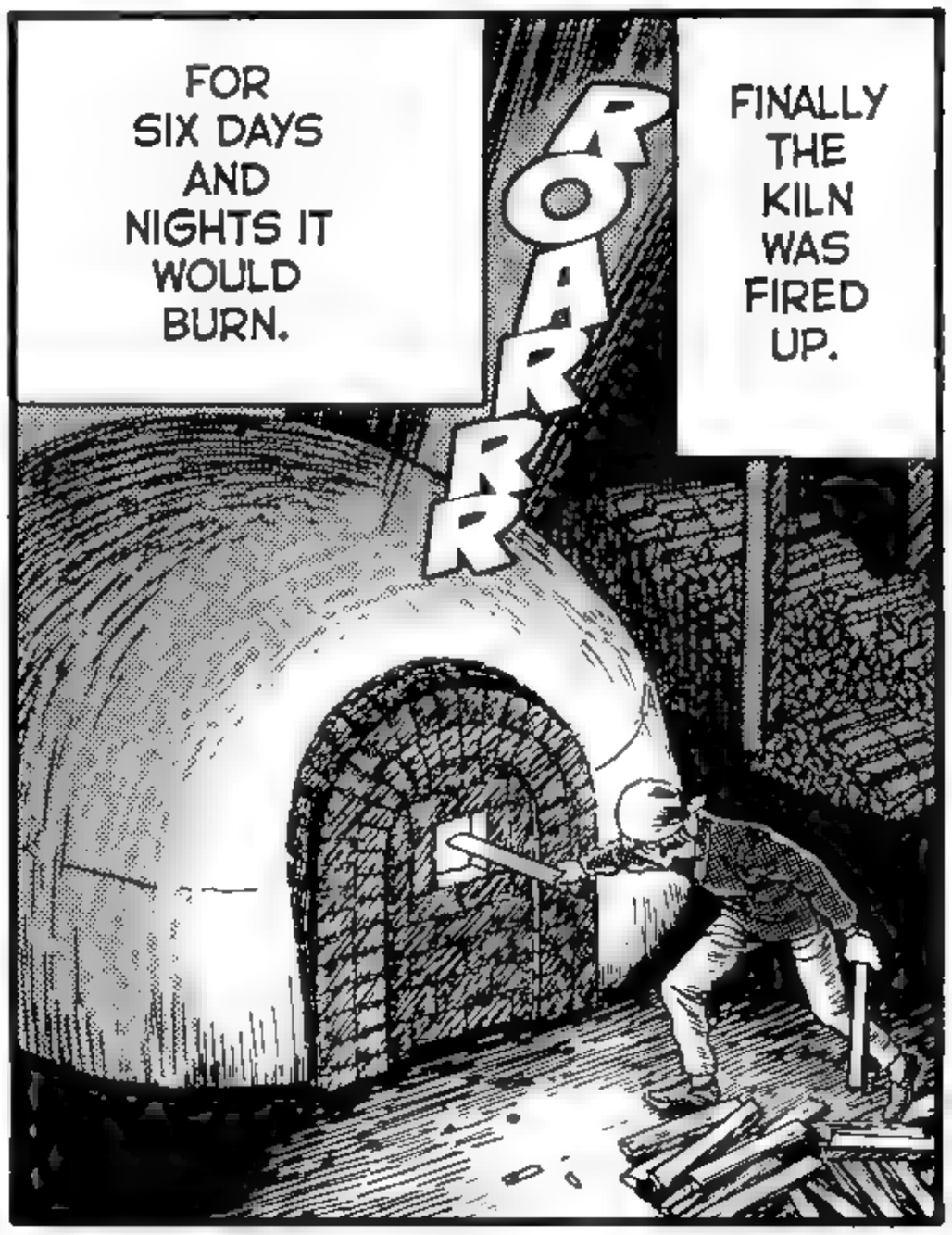
I'M SOAKING WET!




WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S ONLY AFTER I PUT THEM IN THE KILN...
...THAT THEY TURN THAT WAY.


YOU'RE NOT MAKING THOSE WARPED ONES ANY-MORE?
HEY, THESE ARE NORMAL VASES.


WE WERE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO GO NEAR THE COTTAGE.


FOR SIX DAYS AND NIGHTS IT WOULD BURN.
ROARRR
FINALLY THE KILN WAS FIRED UP.

IS FATHER STILL UP THIS LATE?

CHAK

IT'S ALREADY ONE IN THE MORNING ...

I WONDER IF HE'S ALL RIGHT. HE HASN'T SLEPT IN TWO DAYS.

I SHOULD GO CHECK.

THE COTTAGE MIGHT CATCH FIRE IF HE FALLS ASLEEP.

ROARRR

RROARR

ROARR

SNN N

I KNEW HE'D BE ASLEEP.

ROARRR

ROARRR

...I SAW IT!!

ROARR

THAT WAS HOW ...

50 ARR-RRR-RRR-RRR

SH UI CHI ...

SH UI CHI ...

SHUICHI... HELP ME... SHUICHI...

THE HEAT!

AGG HGG

THAT CAN'T BE...

TH-

!

KIRIE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

I TOLD YOU NOT TO GO NEAR THE KILN! GET BACK IN AND GO TO BED!

SHUI-CHI...

SHUI-CHI...

THEY'RE GOING TO BE SUFFERING LIKE THIS FOR FOUR DAYS IN THE KILN!

THIS WILL GO ON FOR FOUR MORE DAYS...

THE HEAT!

THE HEAT!

THEIR VOICES ARE REACHING THIS FAR!

I CAN STILL HEAR THEM...

THE HEAT! THE HEAT!

AIEEEEEE

SHUICHI... SHUICHI!...

THE HEAT!

THE HEAT!

HELLO...

AIEEEEE...

RRING

RRING

!

OH... NO... IT'S NOTHING.

AIEEEEE...

YOU DON'T SOUND WELL.

OH...

IT'S ME, SHUICHI. I GOT LONELY, SO I CALLED YOU.

SHUICHI... HELP ME...

WHAT?!

HEY, I HEAR SOMETHING... SOMEONE'S VOICE?

I TOLD YOU, IT'S NOTHING.

SHUICHI... SHUICHI...

YOU'RE LYING! TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON!

TU

YOU'RE LYING... SOMEONE'S SCREAMING ...I CAN HEAR IT!

SHUICHI...

SHUICHI...

TH-THERE'S NO ONE.

AIEEEE

HELP ME...

AIEEEE

THE HEAT...

THE HEAT...

AND HE DIDN'T TELL US...

ONLY FATHER KNEW.

THE SAME THING MUST'VE HAPPENED THE LAST TIME HE FIRED UP THE KILN.

WE JUST DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT.

NO! GO HOME!

MR. GOSHIMA, I NEED TO SEE YOUR KILN!

GO HOME !!

SHUICHI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! IT'S *LATE!*

?!

YOU'RE HERE?

SHUICHI ...?

HELP ME ...

SHUICHI...!!

IT SOUNDS LIKE MY *MOTHER!*

I SAID, GO *HOME* !

CALLING ME FROM *THE KILN!*

ROARRR

SOMEONE'S *CALLING* FOR ME!

SHUICHI...!!

ROAR

SHU

HIC

NO, THAT'S *NOT TRUE!*

HOW COULD THEY BE IN THERE?

WHY?

YES... IT'S HER...

MY FATHER TOO!

KRAK

GET OUT OF THE WAY!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

WHUDDD

PPPPPPPP

DMBA!

AIEEE

RRRRRLLL

THE HEAT!

THE HEAT!

ZZZZZZ

TUMP

SHUHHCHHH!!

TUMP

HURRY AND GET OUT! *JUST GET OUT!*

SHUICHI! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

KRAKKL

FATHER!

SHU-ICHI!

I'LL CALL AN AMBU-LANCE!

KRAKKL KRAKKL

THE COTTAGE BURNED TO THE GROUND.

EVEN BY DAYLIGHT, FATHER'S OBSESSION CONTINUED.

SCRP

SCRP

I SUPPOSE WE'RE LUCKY WE ONLY LOST THE KILN.

WHAT A NICE SURPRISE ...THIS TURNED OUT WELL.

AHH... YES, HERE WE GO!

THERE MUST BE OTHERS BURIED AROUND HERE...

CHAPTER

5

TWISTED SOULS

...THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ROW HOUSES IN RUINS.

IN KUROUZU CHO...

SOME ARE HIDDEN BETWEEN NEW BUILDINGS.

...CAN BE FOUND ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN.

WHILE OTHERS, ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSING ...

SOME IN THE OPEN, SIDE BY SIDE.

I TOLD YOU NOT TO SEE HER AGAIN!

NO!

PLEASE, SIR, JUST LET ME *TALK* TO HER!

THE NEXT TIME I CATCH YOU WITH MY DAUGHTER, I'LL MAKE YOU *PAY!*

LET ME GO, DAD!

COME ON, YORIKO!

I CAN'T LET MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER NEAR YOUR *WRETCHED* FAMILY!

YORIKO!

WHUD

THOK

DON'T TALK TO MY SISTER THAT WAY!

IT'S ...!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

KAZU-NORI! IT'S ME, KIRIE.

...OUR FAMILIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ENEMIES.

WE LIVE ON OPPOSITE ENDS, BUT...

THEY LIVE IN THE SAME ROW HOUSE AS US.

BUT OUR FAMILIES WON'T LET US SEE EACH OTHER.

WELL... *YOU* KNOW... YOU HAVE SHUICHI...

BUT YORIKO AND I HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE.

KAZUNORI NISHIKI HAS BEEN MY CLASS-MATE EVER SINCE ELEMEN-TARY SCHOOL.

...

...BUT NOTH-ING WORKS.

WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING TO MAKE THEM ACCEPT US...

IT WAS FAIRLY WELL PRESERVED, SO THE OWNER REFURBISHED IT AND RENTED THE ROOMS.

HE LIVED IN ONE OF THE OLD ROW HOUSES.

IT'S CONSIDERED A POOR TENEMENT HOUSE. EVERYONE LOOKS DOWN ON THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE.

WHEN THEY MOVED TO KUROUZU-CHO, KAZUNORI'S FAMILY MOVED INTO THIS BUILDING, WHERE SEVERAL OTHER POOR FAMILIES LIVED.

HM?

WHO IS?

THEY'RE TWISTED.

...THAT THEY SHIELD THEM-SELVES BY BECOMING WARPED.

IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY CAN'T ACCEPT THEIR POVERTY...

ASIDE FROM YORIKO AND ME...

OUR FOLKS.

...THEIR HEARTS ARE BENT OUT OF SHAPE.

BUT YOU'RE NOT LIKE THAT, KAZUNORI!

WHEN THEY FIGHT, THEY CAN'T CONTROL THEM-SELVES. THERE'S NO WAY OUT. YOU CAN'T UNTANGLE THEM.

THAT SLUM COLLECTS PEOPLE WITH TWISTED SOULS.

BESIDES, IT'S GOTTEN WORSE LATELY.

KIDS CAN BE BLIND TO THAT SORT OF THING.

I REMEMBER PLAYING AT YOUR HOUSE ONCE AND EVERYONE WAS NICE TO ME.

I ENDED UP WALKING HIM HOME.

W-WATCH OUT!

SLIP

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? CAN YOU WALK?

I SHOULD GET GOING THOUGH.

YEAH ...

I'LL TEACH THEM A LESSON...

DAMN THOSE ENDOS!

KAZUNORI! I TOLD YOU NOT TO SEE THAT GIRL!

AND THEN YOU LET THEM *BEAT YOU UP?!* HOW *PATHETIC!*

INSTEAD OF LYING AROUND ALL DAY LIKE A *PARASITE!*

MAYBE IF HE GOT A *JOB* HE WOULDN'T HAVE TIME TO HURT MY BOY!

SO THEIR SON DID THIS TO YOU?!

THEY HURT MY POOR KAZUNORI...

OW, MOM...

THE WALLS...

THEY LIVE AT OPPOSITE ENDS, BUT THEIR VOICES GO RIGHT THROUGH...

SHUT UP, BITCH! OR I'LL KILL YOU!

WH-WHAT?! WHY, YOU THUG!

THE THUG'S MOTHER.

THERE SHE GOES!

WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID ABOUT MY SON?!

MAKING YOU LIVE IN THIS SHACK!

I SAID, NO WONDER YOUR SON'S SO SCREWED UP! HIS FATHER GAMBLED AWAY ALL YOUR MONEY!

SHUT YOUR MOUTH!

STOP IT, MOM.

STOP IT!

URRRR ...

YOU'RE ONE TO TALK! YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE IF YOUR STUPID HUSBAND COULD RUN A BUSINESS! I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU!

SHUT UP!

I LOVE YORIKO!

DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?

WHY CAN'T WE JUST GET ALONG?

IT'S ALL POINT-LESS! FORGET ABOUT IT!

SLAM

WHY CAN'T YOU STOP FIGHTING?

I CAN'T STAND IT!

KAZU-NORI!

SLAM

YORIKO!

NO!

PLEASE, DAD!

THAT'S ENOUGH!

YORIKO!

SLAM

KAZUNORI! STOP! YOU'RE EMBARRASSING US!

GET BACK INSIDE!

...

MMM...

I WISH THEY COULD FIND A WAY TO BE HAPPY.

THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON, SHUICHI.

THE REASON THE INHABITANTS OF THAT ROW HOUSE DON'T GET ALONG...

WHY NOT?

IT CAN'T BE HELPED THOUGH.

IF WHAT I SAW HASN'T DRIVEN ME COMPLETELY INSANE, THEN THOSE HOUSES ARE PART OF THIS. AND EVERYONE IN THEM IS DOOMED.

THE SPIRAL HAS TWISTED THEIR SOULS.

...IS BECAUSE THEIR HOUSE IS CURSED BY THE SPIRAL.

WHAT?

I WON'T ASK FOR YOUR HELP ANY-MORE.

FORGET IT!

WHAT? *NO!*

WE COULD GO TONIGHT... RUN AWAY...

SO HOW ABOUT IT, KIRIE? WHY DON'T YOU AND I JUST LEAVE TOWN?

I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT...

...KAZUNORI AND YORIKO THAT SEVERAL DAYS LATER I WENT BACK.

THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!

EXCUSE ME...

I ADVISE YOU TO TIE UP YOUR DAUGHTER!

IT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T KEEP AN EYE ON THAT IMBECILE SON OF YOURS!

...AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU.

OH, KIRIE...

HAS... HAS SOME-THING HAP-PENED?

LET'S GO FIND THEM!

THEY'RE PROBABLY HUDDLED UP IN SOME ABANDONED SHACK.

ALL RIGHT, LET'S SPLIT UP. IF *THEY* FIND THEM FIRST, THEY'LL GO SOFT ON THEM...

IT'S YOUR SON WHO DID THE SEDUCING!

KAZUNORI'S BEEN SEDUCED BY THAT GIRL AGAIN. THEY'VE BEEN GONE SINCE YESTERDAY.

SSS...SHHSH

WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

CREEEEEK

SHHSH...

SHLURRR

SSS... SHISH...

SHLURRR

AAHH!

TWO SNAKES INTERTWINED!

SNAKES!

WH-WHAT IS *THAT?!*

THEY'RE MAKING LOVE.

...THEY'RE NOT FIGHTING.

SLP

THEY'RE FIGHTING...

ALL TWISTED UP... JUST LIKE OUR PARENTS.

HOW CREEPY.

NO...

SLP

SHOULD WE JUST RUN AWAY?

I WANT TO BE WITH YOU FOR-EVER.

KAZUNORI, I CAN'T STAND BEING AWAY FROM YOU.

YES.

YOU MEAN ELOPE?

WE'LL BE TOGETHER *FOREVER!*

I'M SO *HAPPY!*

LET'S DO IT! LET'S LEAVE KUROUZU-CHO!

ALL RIGHT THEN, TOMOR-ROW!

I'LL GO ANY-WHERE IF IT MEANS I CAN BE WITH YOU.

RUNNING AWAY... WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THEM?

MR. ENDO... SIR...

OH NO!

THEY MUST BE HERE!

WHAM

BAM

BAM

HUH ?!

COME ON, YORIKO!

NO!

WHUD

EEYAAAHH! STOP IT, DAD!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

KAZU-NORI ...

...

NO! NO!

IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP...

MAYBE IT WOULD BE BEST FOR YOU TWO TO RUN AWAY.

THEY'RE TERRIBLE.

POOR YORIKO...

URR...

IT'S YOU...

OH...

THE NEXT DAY...

...I DIDN'T SEE HOW HIS BODY WAS TWIST-ED...

AT THAT TIME, I JUST DIDN'T NOTICE IT...

YES, THEY PROMISED TO MEET ME HERE.

ARE THEY REALLY COMING?

GOOD IDEA.

ELOPING, HUH...

WE'LL ACCOMPANY THEM TO THE STATION AND SEE THEM OFF.

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT'S THE RUSH?

Huff Huff

Huff Huff

HERE THEY COME!

WHAT SHOULD WE DO THEN?

THEY HAVE SOMEONE WAITING AT THE STATION!

OUR FATHERS ARE AFTER US NOW!

OUR PARENTS SAW US LEAVING!

YES! LET'S GO!

AND HEAD TO THE BEACH!

WE'LL CIRCLE AROUND TO THE ROAD OUT OF TOWN!

THIS WAY!

STOP!

THERE THEY ARE!

SHAAAA

YOU'RE GOING HOME!

STOP THIS NON-SENSE!

GET OUT OF OUR WAY, DAD!

WHAT ?!

THIS WAY, KAZU-NORI!

I'VE SPOTTED THEM!

SHAAAAA

STOP!

KRICH

KRICH

I... I CAN'T MAKE IT...

BAM

...TO MAKE YOU UNDER-STAND ?!

HOW MANY TIMES DO I GOTTA HIT YOU...

Huff

Huff Huff

Huff Huff

KRIC

KRICH

KRICH

YOU'RE BEING A REAL PAIN.

THEY'RE SEPARATING US AGAIN...

KAZU-NORI ...

Huff Huff

SHAAAAA...

Huff Huff

Huff Huff

YORIKO, DO IT! LIKE BEFORE!

NOT THIS TIME, YORIKO!

Huff Huff

Huff Huff

NO...

WHAT ?!

KRAK

KR AK

LIKE THIS!

KRAK

HURRY!

Y... YORIKO...

KRAK KRAK KRAK

SNAP

Y...
YORIKO
?!

SHP
P

YORIKO
!

YORIKO!

KAZUNORI!

AHH...

GIVE ME YOUR HAND!

SHIT

ニヤニヤ

ニヤニヤ

ニヤニヤ

DOMM

THEY'RE LIKE STEEL WIRE!

OH GOD... IT'S TOO TIGHT!

YORIKO! YORIKO! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

WH-WHAT'S GOING ON?!

WE'LL SAVE YOU!

UGH!

SHIIISH!

WE'RE NEVER GOING TO BE APART...

STOP IT... FATHER ...

FOREVER ...

THAT'S RIGHT ...

THAT WAS THE LAST WE SAW OF THEM BEFORE THEY DISAPPEARED INTO THE SEA.

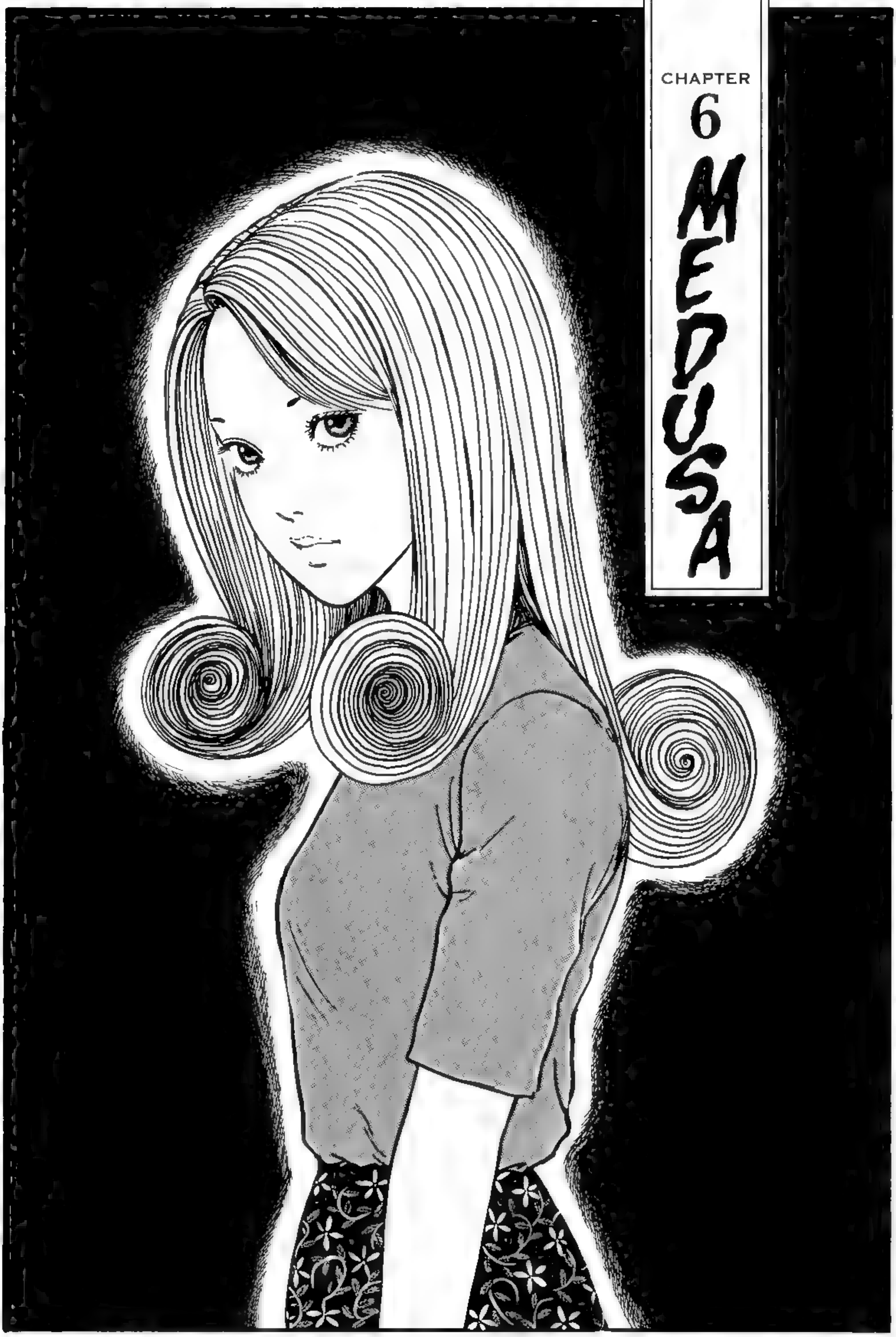
SHAAAAA...

BASHOOM

CHAPTER

6

MEDUSA



...WHEN HE SLIPPED. HE'D ALWAYS BEEN A SHOW-OFF, TRYING TO GET PEOPLE'S ATTENTION.

HE'D BEEN DOING ACROBATICS ON THE HANDRAIL...

THE OTHER DAY, ONE OF MY CLASS-MATES FELL FROM THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL.

THAT WAS JUST CRAZY. HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRIED SOME-THING LIKE THAT.

THAT WAS SO HORRIBLE, SEKINO.

AND YET, SUR-ROUNDED BY THE CROWD...

...CONTENT.

...HE SOMEHOW LOOKED...

IT'S NICE WHEN OTHER PEOPLE NOTICE YOU. DON'T YOU THINK SO, KIRIE?

YOU DO?

I UNDER-STAND HOW HE MUST HAVE FELT.

OH, I DON'T KNOW.

REALLY ?

I DO. LATELY I CRAVE IT.

I DON'T LIKE STICKING OUT.

WELL ...

HMM...

I DON'T WANT TO JUST CAUSE A FUSS. HOW CAN I EXPLAIN IT... I WANT TO BE SEEN.

TOO BAD I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET NOTICED.

I LOVE IT WHEN PEOPLE LOOK AT ME!

I *WANT* TO STAND OUT!

A LOT OF PEOPLE IN KUROUZU-CHO HAVE BEEN ACTING STRANGE LATELY.

WHAT, SHU-ICHI?

I'M BEGIN-NING TO UNDER-STAND.

THIS TOWN IS CONTAMI-NATED BY THE SPIRAL.

YOU KNOW ...

WHY RISK YOUR LIFE TRYING TO GET ATTENTION?

THE GUY WHO FELL FROM THE ROOF THE OTHER DAY WAS JUST AN EXTREME CASE.

IT'S ABOUT MESMERISM.

DON'T YOU SEE?

THEY BOTH HAVE THE POWER TO ATTRACT PEOPLE.

WHAT DOES WANTING ATTENTION HAVE TO DO WITH A SPIRAL?

NOT AGAIN.

SO YOU'RE SAYING HE DIED BECAUSE OF THE SPIRAL?

NOT JUST HIM, BUT EVERYONE WHO'S OBSESSED WITH ATTENTION.

THAT'S RIGHT.

THAT'S WHY PEOPLE POSSESSED BY THE SPIRAL WANT TO GET THE ATTENTION OF OTHERS.

SPIRALS SUCK THINGS IN...THE EYE FOLLOWS THE PATTERN TO THE CENTER.

I WONDER IF SHE'S ALL RIGHT.

TH-THAT SOUNDS LIKE SEKINO. SO SHE'S ALSO AFFECTED BY THE SPIRAL?

MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET A HAIRCUT.

HUH?

...YOUR HAIR'S GETTING LONG.

HEY, YOU KNOW...

PROB-ABLY.

IT FEELS LIKE IT'S GROWN ALL OF A SUDDEN.

THE NEXT DAY ...

KURÔZU HIGH

KIRIE ...

WHAT DID YOU DO TO YOUR HAIR?

HUH?

I COULD FEEL EVERYONE LOOKING AT ME.

WHAT ?

WHERE'D THESE CURLS COME FROM?

WOMEN

I CAN'T GET RID OF THEM.

WHY DON'T YOU BRAID IT?

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA. CAN YOU HELP ME?

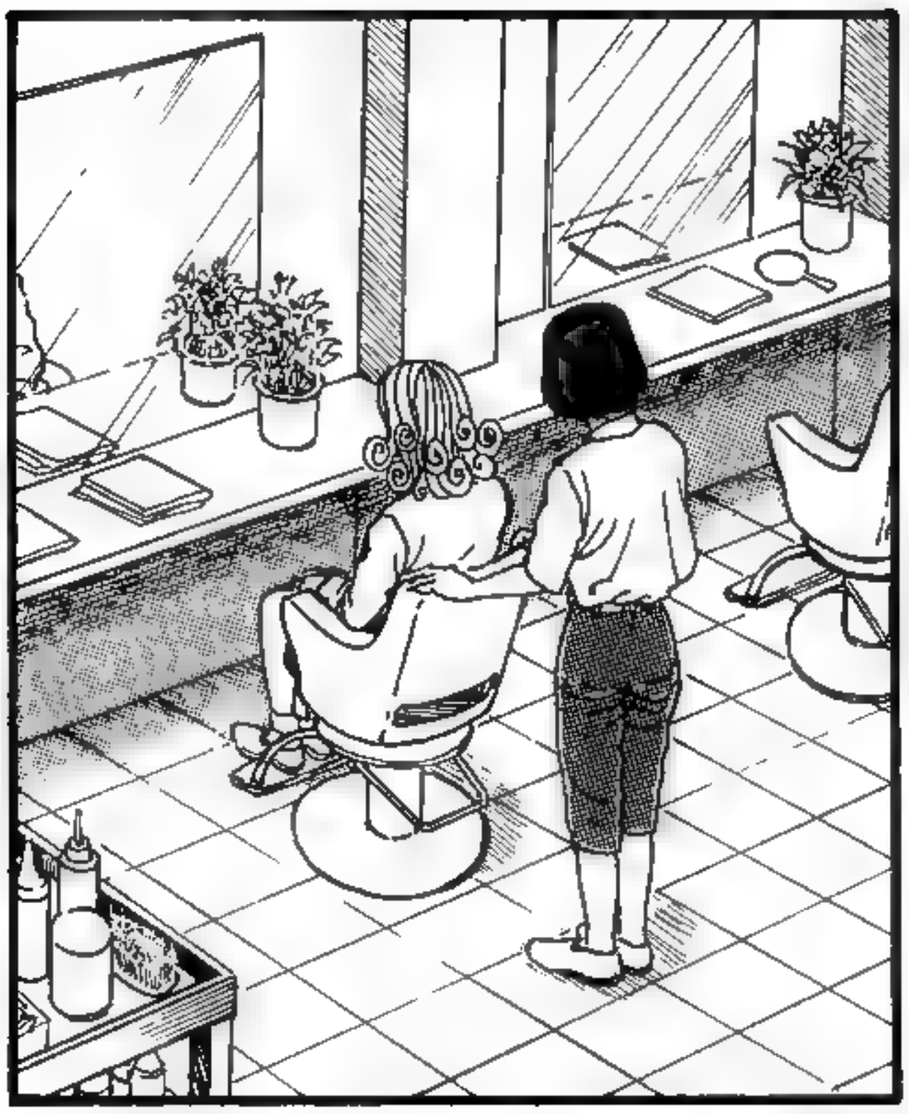
FWIP

TING

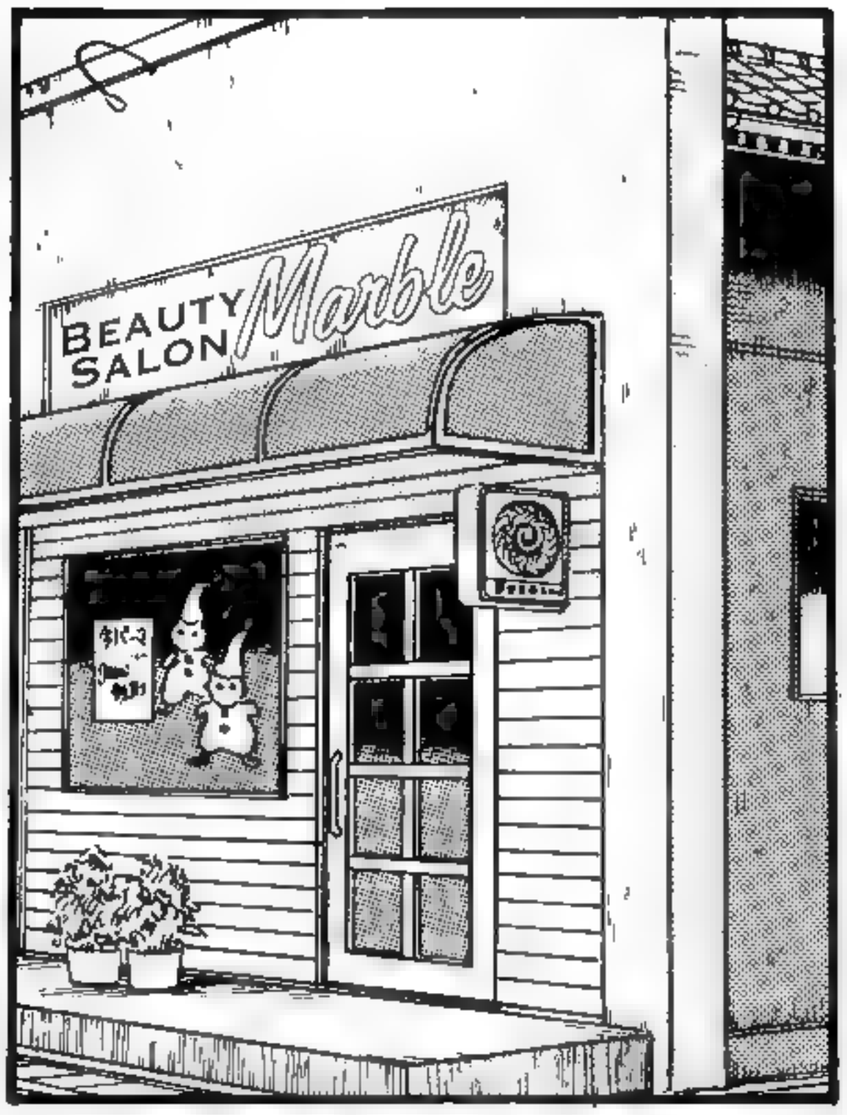
THIS IS UNBEAR-ABLE!

...

WHIRRL WHIRRL



BEAUTY SALON Marble


BEAUTY SALON Marble

SHALL I GIVE YOU A STRAIGHT PERM?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW ...

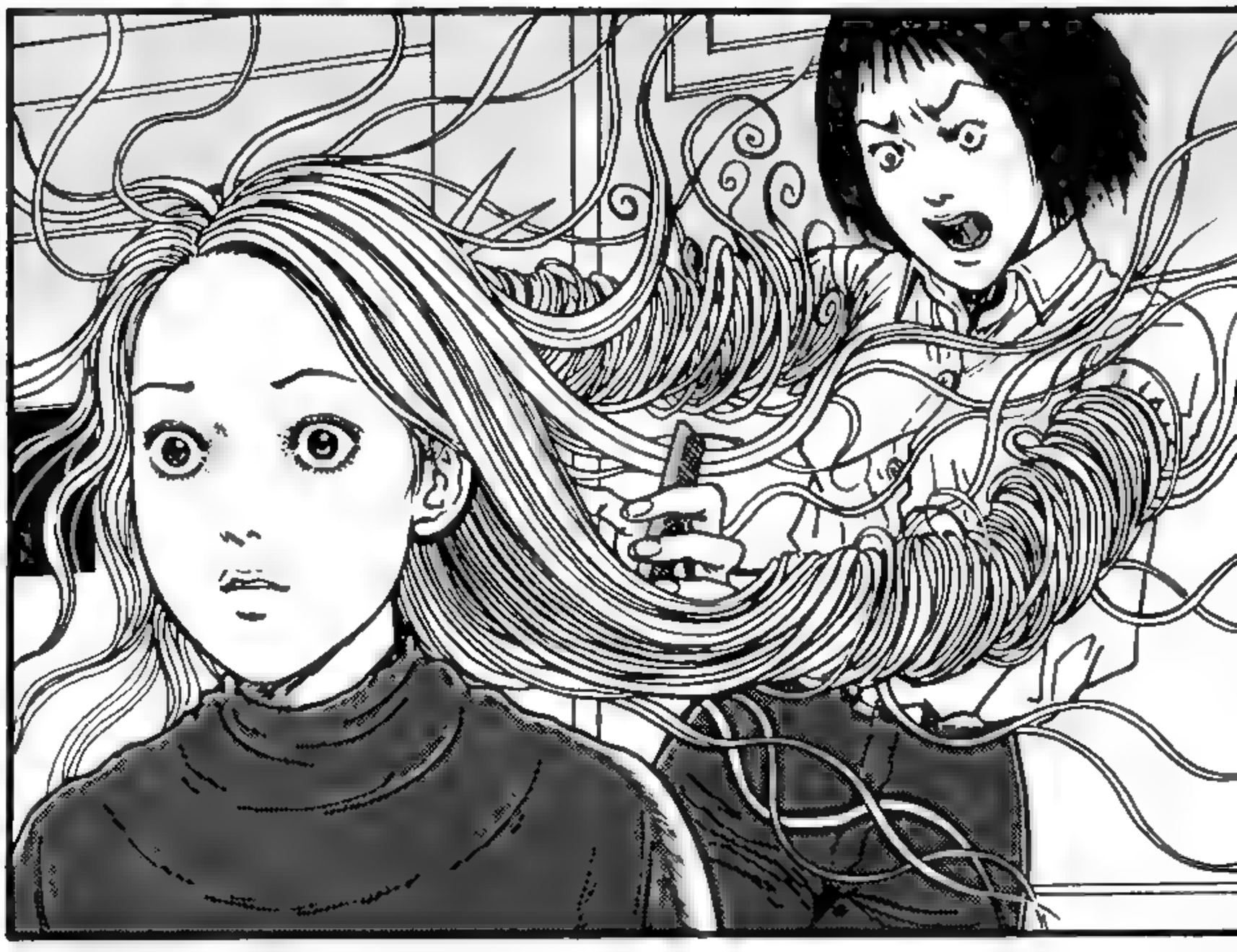
...I HAVEN'T DONE ANY-THING TO MY HAIR. HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND...

THEN HERE GO YOUR LOVELY LOCKS.

YOU'RE SURE ABOUT THIS?

I DON'T MIND HAVING SHORT HAIR.
HMM... COULD YOU JUST CUT IT OFF?
BUT I DON'T WANT THIS WEIRD STUFF ON MY HEAD.

AIEEE
BEAUTY SALON



...YOU'RE A MONSTER!

YOU'RE ...

AAGH!

I CAN'T BREATHE!

WHEN MY FAMILY TRIED TO TAKE ME TO THE HOSPITAL...

...IT STRANGLED ME AGAIN.

IT GREW RAPIDLY, MOVING ON ITS OWN AS IF IT WAS ALIVE.

EVERY TIME I TRIED TO CUT IT OFF, IT STARTED TO CHOKE ME.

WAS MY HAIR ...

... CURSED BY THE SPIRAL?

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

IT SWIRLED IN PLACE, DISPLAYING ITS CURLS.

EVEN WHEN I STOPPED RESISTING, IT KEPT MOVING.

...

...

MOM? DAD?

WH-WHAT'S WRONG?

AND IT WAS ATTRACTED TO CROWDS.

I SOON REALIZED THAT MY HAIR HAD THE POWER TO MESMERIZE PEOPLE WHO LOOKED AT IT.

KIRIE ...

...THE BETTER TO DRAW PEOPLE'S ATTENTION.

MY HAIR CONSTANTLY CHANGED SHAPE...

SASSS!

YOU BETTER FIX IT! *NOW!*

GOSHIMA! WHAT'S WITH YOUR HAIR?!

I ENVY YOU.

IT MUST BE NICE.

I'M IMPRESSED, KIRIE.

HWOOOOOOO

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T LIKE ATTENTION, BUT NOW YOU STAND OUT MORE THAN ANYONE AT SCHOOL.

I SHOULD WATCH OUT... NOT LOOK TOO MUCH.

EVERYONE WHO LOOKS AT YOU IS CAPTIVATED.

KUROUZU STATION

AFTER SCHOOL MY HAIR TOOK ME TO THE STATION...

...BECAUSE IT WANTED A LARGER AUDIENCE.

I'LL STAND OUT TOO... YOU WAIT AND SEE.

YOU SHOULD KNOW I TAKE THIS AS A CHAL-LENGE ...

...

MRR MRR

...
!

FWIP
SHUICHI
...

I ENDED UP LIKE THIS BECAUSE OF THIS TOWN.

BECAUSE THIS TOWN IS CURSED BY THE SPIRAL.

...

KUROUZU STATION

IS MY HAIR DRAINING ALL MY STRENGTH?

NOW I'M TOO WEAK TO GET AWAY FROM HERE...

LOOK AT *ME!*

GOOD MORNING KIRIE!

...GROW-ING AND GROW-ING.

MY HAIR KEPT ON...

WOW!

I WON'T LOSE TO *YOU.*

SEE? NOW I HAVE SOMETHING WORTH LOOKING AT.

SEKINO ...

FW SH

SHA SHA

SHWAA

SHWAA

HER HAIR AND MINE KEPT CURLING AND DISPLAYING RELENTLESSLY.

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS LEFT THEIR CLASSES AND STARED VACANTLY AT THE SIGHT.

FROM THAT DAY ON THE SCHOOL WAS A BATTLEFIELD.

SHWAA

SHWAA

Huff

Uff

SWAY

SWAY

SWAY

ONLY ONE OF US SHOULD GET THIS MUCH ATTEN-TION!

KIRIE... *ADMIT DEFEAT!*

Huff

Uff

SWAY

FWOOSH

ARRGH! I'VE HAD ENOUGH!

Urgh!

FWISH

HISSS

Unnn...

FWISH

FWISH

FWISH

FWISH

FP

KIRIE!

AIEE...

TMP

SNIPP

ggg

KYA AA A!

FWP

I'LL CUT IT OFF YOU!

KIRIE!

FWP

AAIYAAAH!

ARGH!

WHUD

SU AY

RRRLLLLLL

...THE MOST *ATTRACTIVE* GIRL IN TOWN!!

AHA HA HA! NOW *I'M* THE MOST...

I WON!

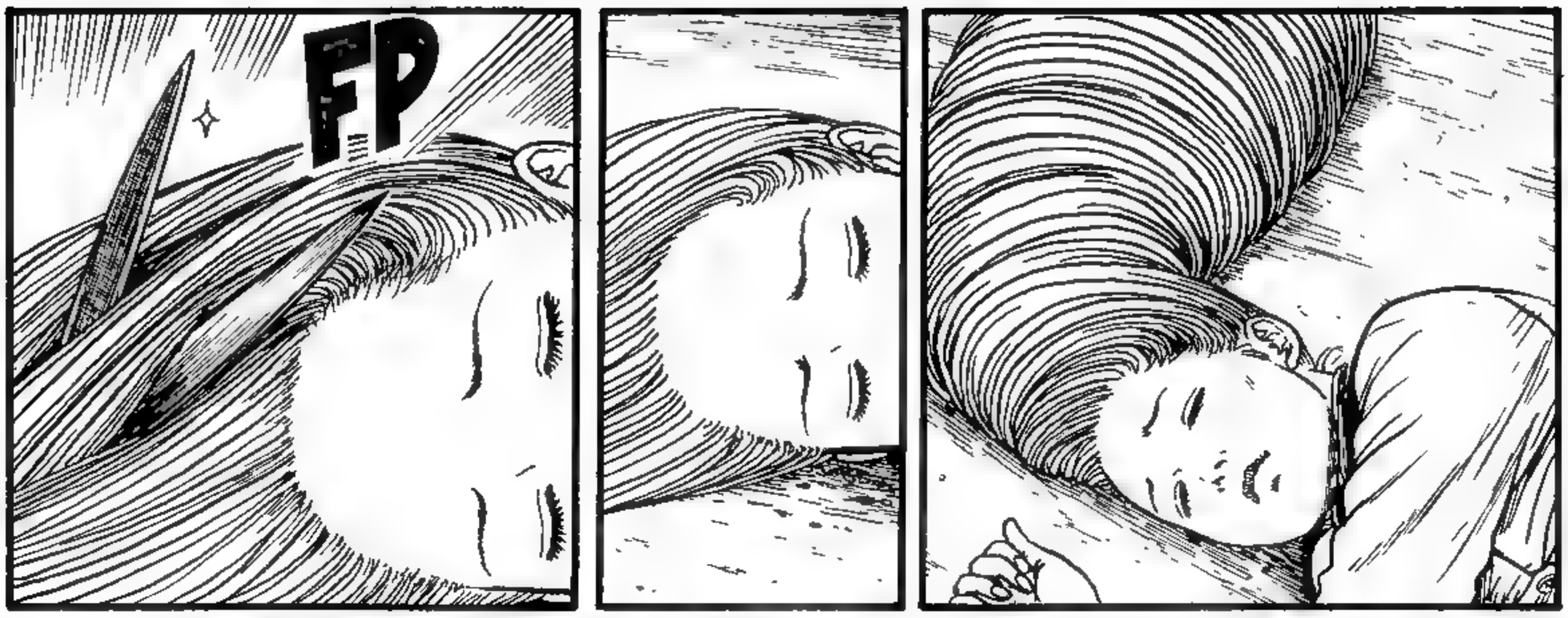
HA HA HA!

HSSS HSSS

HA HA HA!

NOW I'LL SHOW *ALL* OF KUROUZU-CHO!

EVERYONE, FOLLOW ME!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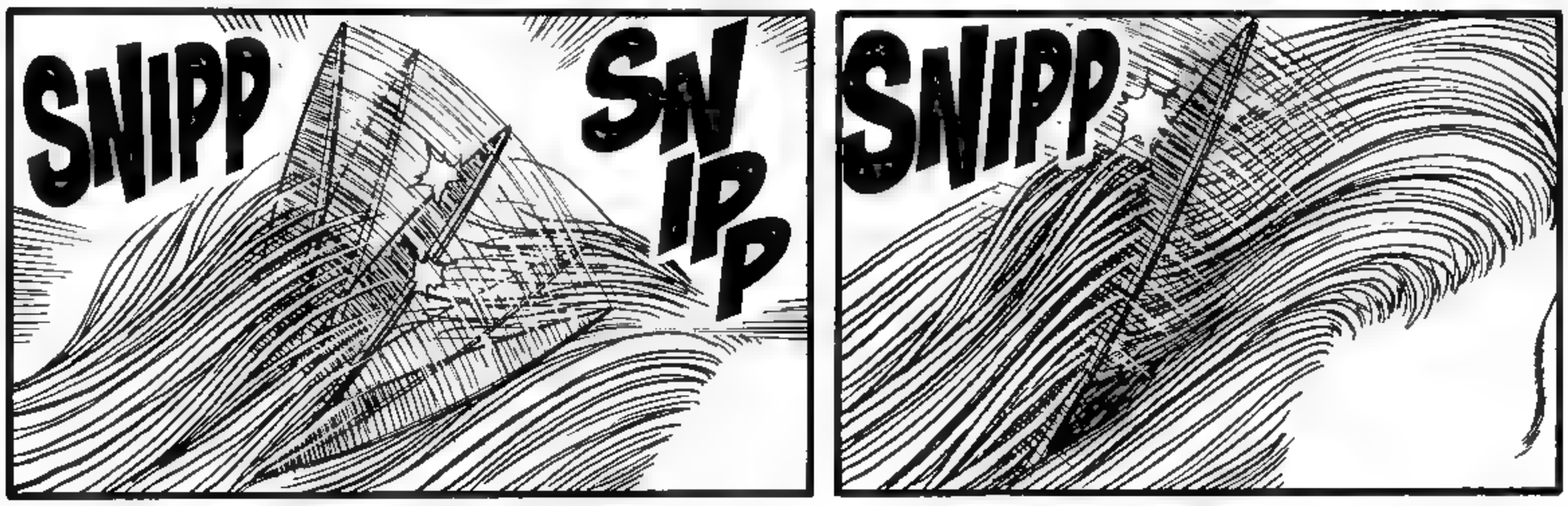
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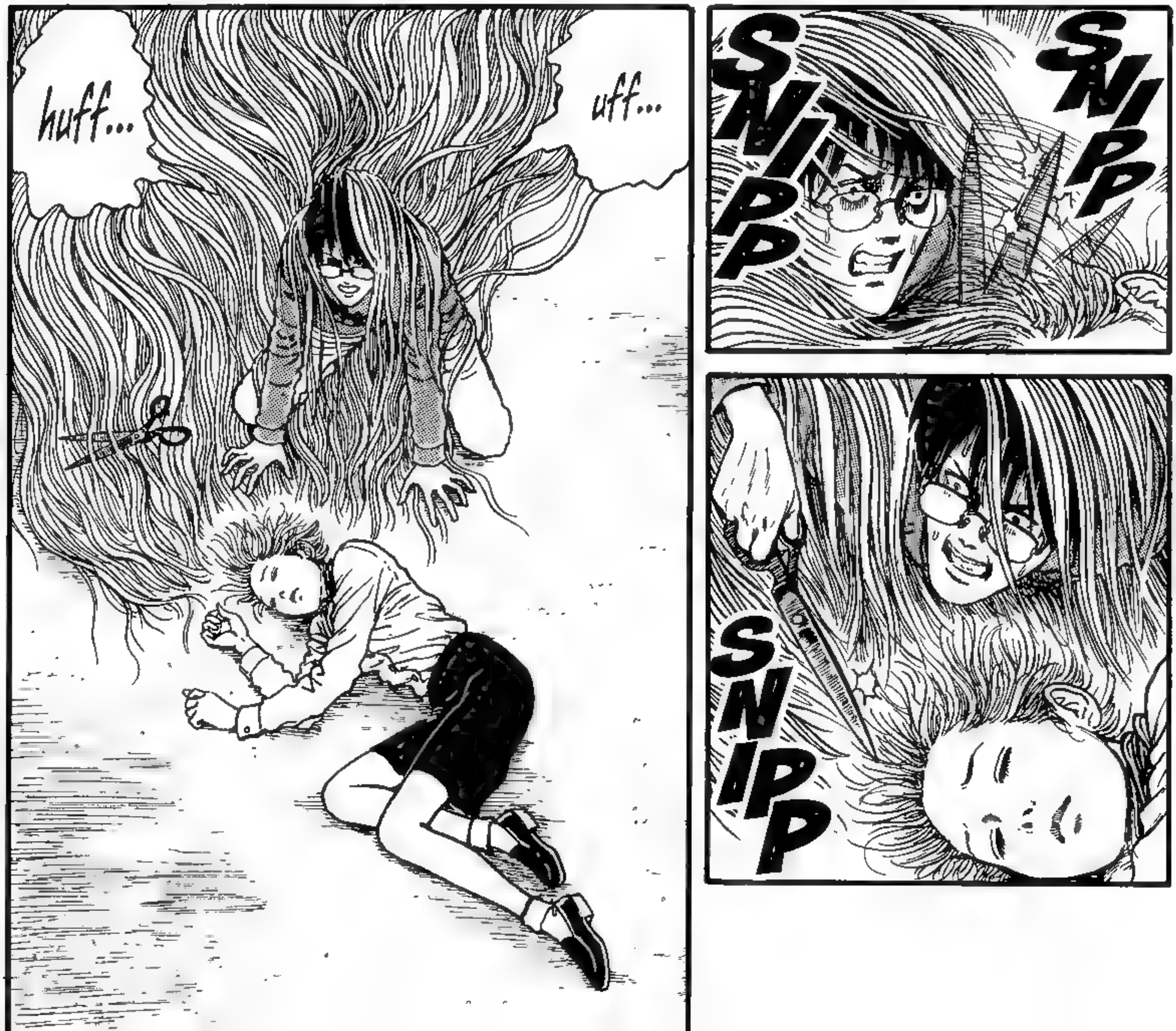

huff...
uff...
SNIPP
SNIPP

SNIPP

KIRIE!

KIRIE!

huff

huff...

KIRIE...

huff...

SHUICHI ...

YOU'RE COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.

huff...

WHAT HAPPENED?

IF THAT'S THE CASE...

...MUST HAVE BEEN DRAINING ALL YOUR ENERGY TO GROW.

THE HAIR...

AHA HA HA... HA HA HA...

HA HA HA!

EVERYBODY LOOK!

HA HA HA! LOOK AT ME!

SSHS HSSS

huff huff

SSHS HSSS

SHLIP SHLIP

SHL IP

BUT I NEED MORE ATTENTION... MORE...

Huff

I'M REALLY TIRED ...

Huff

SHLIP SHLIP SHLIP SHLIP SHLIP SHLIP

Huff

Huff

Huff

Huff

Huff

WHUD

Huff

Huff

Huff

HER HAIR REMAINED ON THE TELEPHONE POLE... DISPLAYING ITSELF... FOR SEVERAL HOURS.

SSHH

SSHH

CHAPTER

7

JACK-IN-THE-BOX

BOO!

EVERYONE CALLED HIM "JACK-IN-THE-BOX."

HE LOVED TO JUMP OUT AND SURPRISE PEOPLE.

IN MY SCHOOL THERE WAS A SEVENTH-GRADER NAMED MITSURU YAMAGUCHI.

BOO!

WHAT A PAIN.

I THINK I LOST HIM.

KIRIE! LET'S GO OUT SOME-TIME!

ONE DAY I REALIZED HE LIKED ME.

GOOD IDEA, SHIHO.

LET'S HURRY HOME BEFORE HE FINDS YOU.

IT GOT ON MY NERVES PRETTY FAST.

HEY, KIRIE...

YEAH.

DON'T YOU THINK IT'S CREEPY THAT WE HAVE TO WALK THROUGH A CEMETERY ON OUR WAY TO SCHOOL?

BURYING THEM, INSTEAD OF CREMATING THEM.

THEY'RE WHAT?

DID YOU HEAR THEY'RE BURYING PEOPLE AGAIN?

OH, COME ON. ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?

WHY?

REALLY ?

...WOULD FORM A BLACK SPIRAL IN THE SKY?

DO YOU REMEMBER HOW THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATIONS...

BUT I HEARD THAT EVEN WHEN SOMEONE WHO'S DIED HERE IS CREMATED SOMEWHE E ELSE, *THE SMOKE STILL TURNS INTO A BLACK SPIRAL.*

IT ONLY HAPPENS WITH PEOPLE FROM OUR TOWN.

SOME PEOPLE SAID THAT IT WAS BECAUSE OF A MALFUNCTION IN THE FURNACE.

OTHERS SAID IT'S BECAUSE OF THE WEATHER.

...IF EVERYONE HERE IS CURSED BY THE SPIRAL.

I WON-DER...

OH, NOTH-ING.

WHAT WAS THAT?

ANYWAY, THAT'S WHY THEY STOPPED DOING CREMA-TIONS.

I WONDER WHY? IT'S REALLY STRANGE.

YEAH, BUT IT'S STILL PRETTY CREEPY TO THINK THERE'S ACTUAL *BODIES* UNDER SOME OF THESE GRAVESTONES.

I GUESS IT BEATS HAVING THAT SPIRAL CLOUD.

SO PEOPLE ARE HAVING THEIR RELATIVES BURIED INSTEAD OF CRE-MATED.

LET'S WALK FASTER.

I WISH I HADN'T MENTIONED IT. NOW I'M GETTING SCARED.

EEYAA!

BOO!

WILL YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!!

HOW ABOUT YOU, KIRIE?

MITSURU!! HOW COULD YOU?!

DID I SURPRISE YOU?

IT'S JUST MY HABIT... TO SURPRISE PEOPLE.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU MAD. I'M SORRY...

FORGET ABOUT HIM. HE'S A DRAG.

I KNOW. SHUICHI SAITO, RIGHT?

BESIDES, SHE ALREADY HAS A BOY-FRIEND.

MITSURU, HOW IMMATURE *ARE* YOU? YOU WON'T WIN ANY POINTS BY SCARING THE WITS OUT OF HER.

JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!!

I DON'T WANT TO HAVE ANY-THING TO DO WITH YOU OR YOUR SURPRISES!

SUR-PRISE THEM, YOU KNOW?!

I WANT TO HAVE A PRETTY GIRL LIKE YOU AS MY GIRLFRIEND AND IMPRESS EVERYONE!

LET'S GO, SHIHO.

YOU'LL GO OUT WITH ME EVENTUALLY!

I WON'T GIVE UP, KIRIE.

I LOVE YOU, KIRIE!

THE JACK-IN-THE-BOX KEPT FOLLOWING ME.

BOO!

I WISH MY HANDS COULD REACH INTO YOUR ROOM!

I LOVE YOU!!

COME OUT, KIRIE!

...MITSURU YAMAGU-CHI.

LET'S SEE...

WHO FROM?

IT'S FOR YOU, KIRIE.

DELIVERY FOR KIRIE GOSHIMA.

PLEASE DON'T SEND ME ANYTHING ELSE.

MITSURU, I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS.

THE MORE YOU PESTER ME, THE LESS I LIKE YOU.

TO BE HONEST, I'M GETTING REALLY IRRITATED.

AT LEAST YOU COULD DO THAT MUCH.

BUT YOU DIDN'T EVEN OPEN IT.

I REALLY DO LIKE YOU... HOW CAN I SHOW IT?

GUESS I DIDN'T TAKE THE RIGHT APPROACH.

VROOOM

...

VRRROOOM

W-WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!

TMP

I SAW SOMETHING LIKE THIS ON TV!

THAT'S IT!

NO! STOP!

VRRROOOM

MY LOVE FOR YOU WILL STOP THIS CAR!!

SCREECH

KRRRSH

AIEEE!!

MITSURU?!

11

213

SHFF

SHFF

SHFF

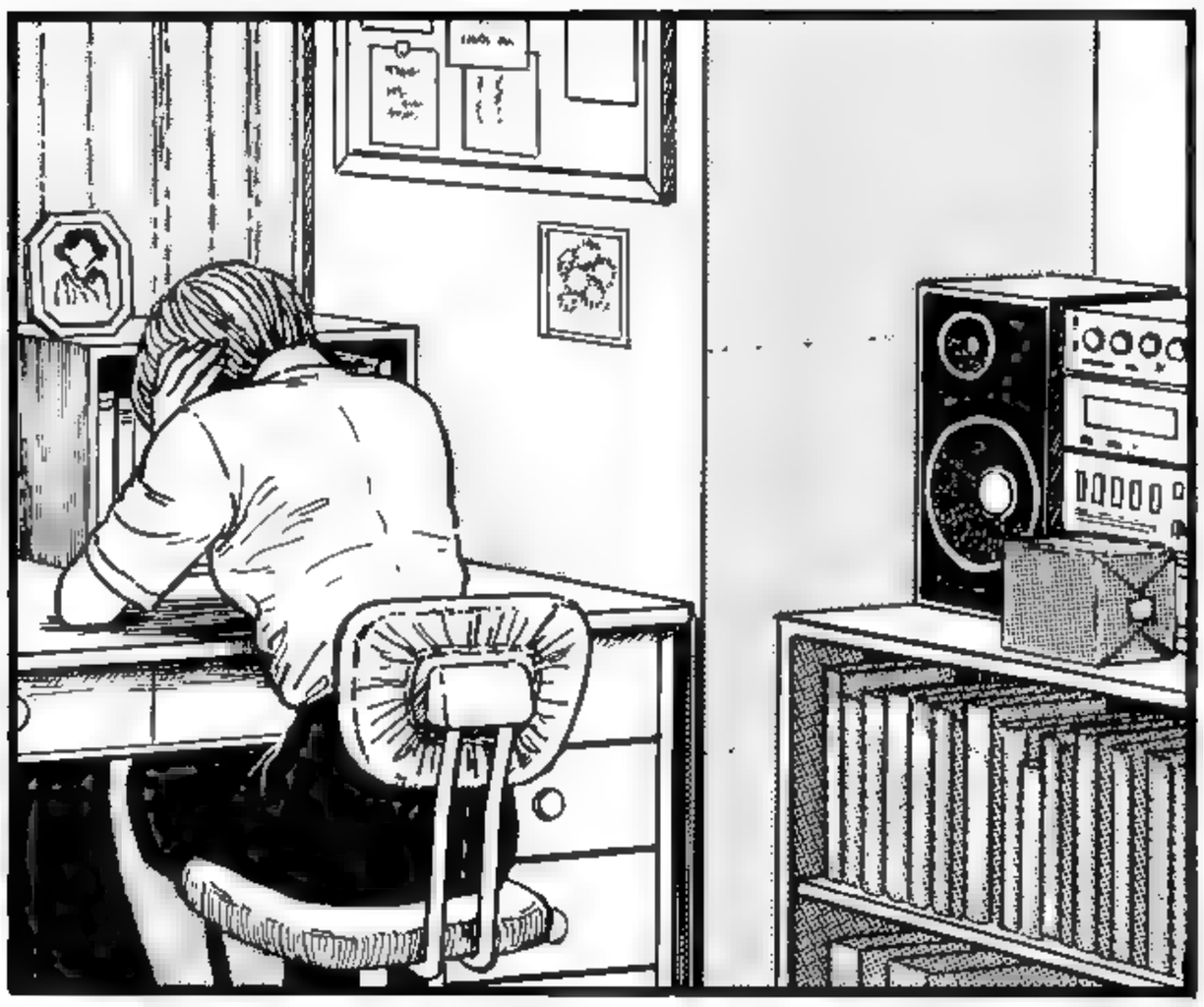
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING!

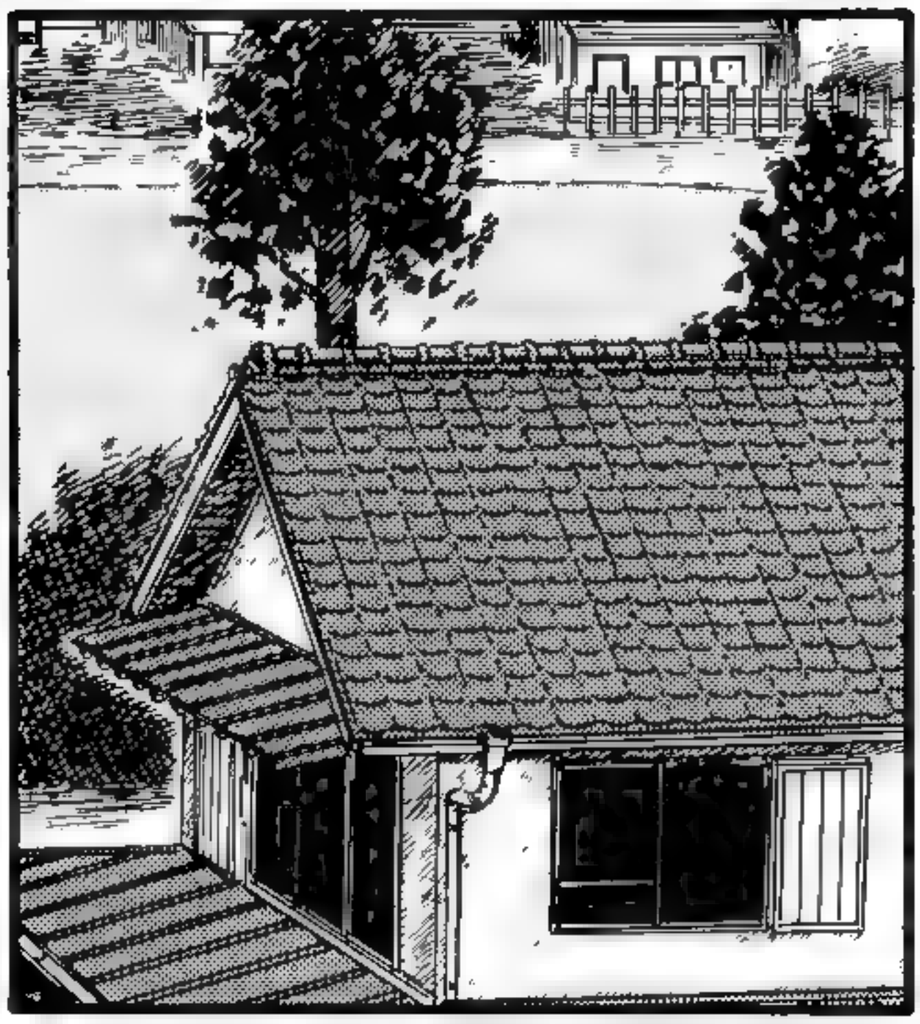
I HEARD JACK-IN-THE-BOX GOT KILLED BY A CAR!

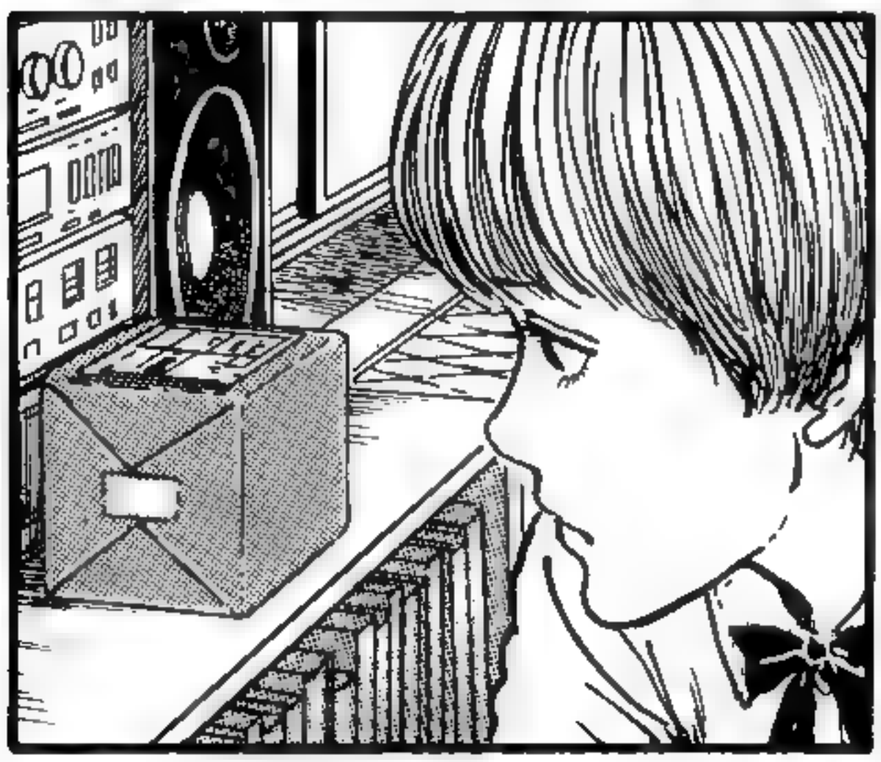
HIS BODY GOT JAMMED IN THE FRONT WHEEL!!

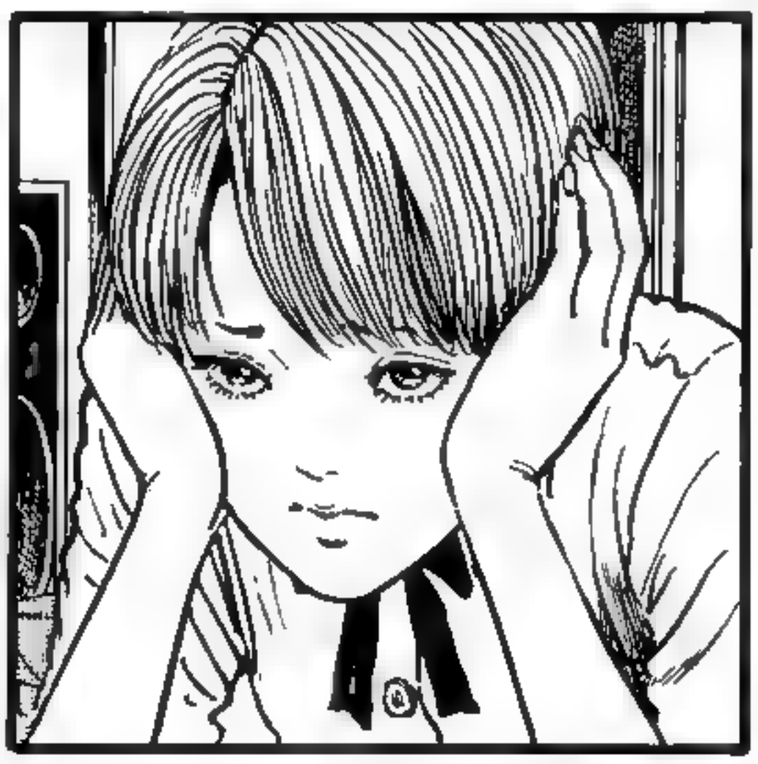
THEY HAD TO USE A BLOWTORCH TO EXTRACT HIS BODY FROM THE CAR!

IT'S GOING TO BE A CLOSED-CASKET FUNERAL!

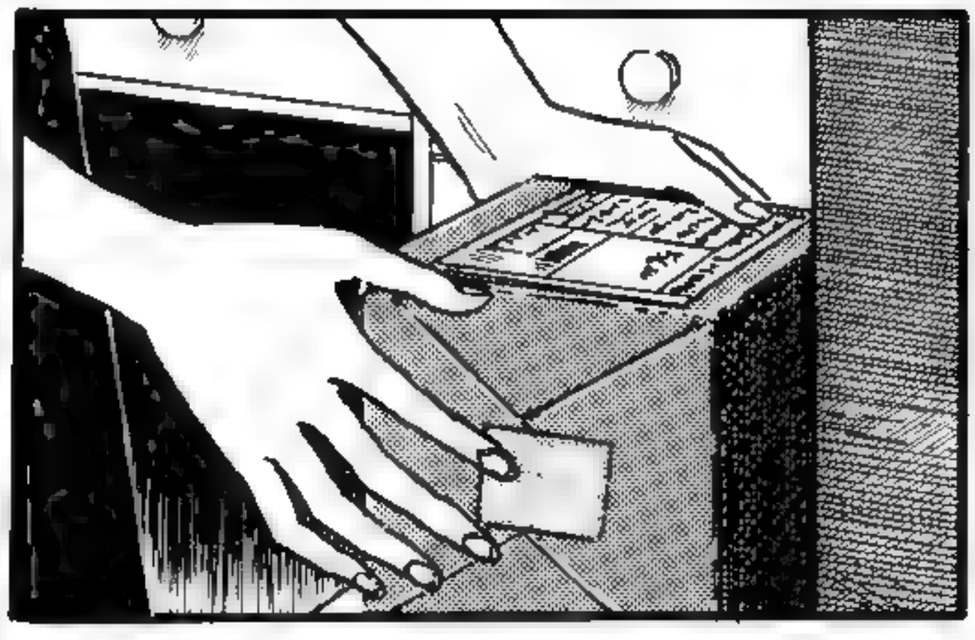


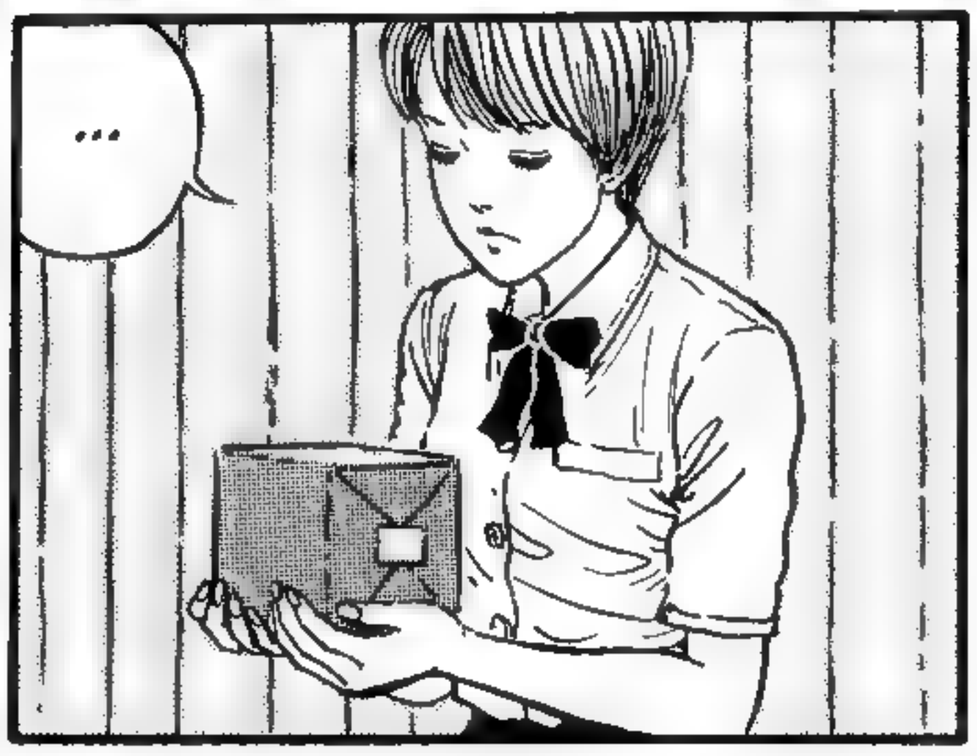






KRICKLE
KRICKLE




...

With Love,
Mitsuru

...

With Love,
Mitsuru

CHAK

BWONG

BWONG

TWOING

YOU MEAN ABOUT MITSURU?

SO WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

WHAT'S WRONG, KIRIE? YOU SOUND KINDA DOWN.

HELLO, SHUICHI?

IT'S ME, KIRIE...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT.

BUT...

IT IS YOUR FAULT ...

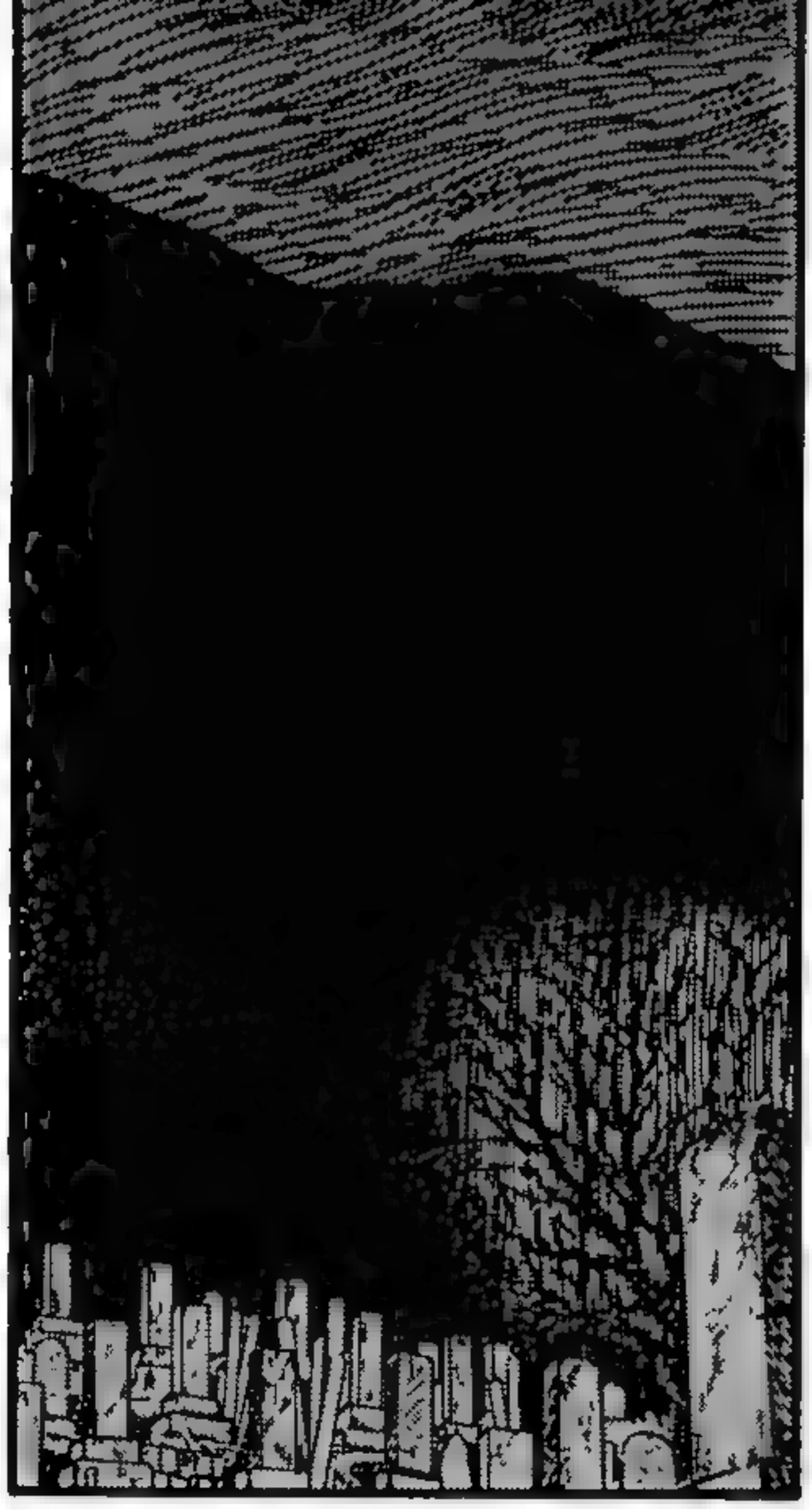
?!

HE DIED FOR YOU, DIDN'T HE?

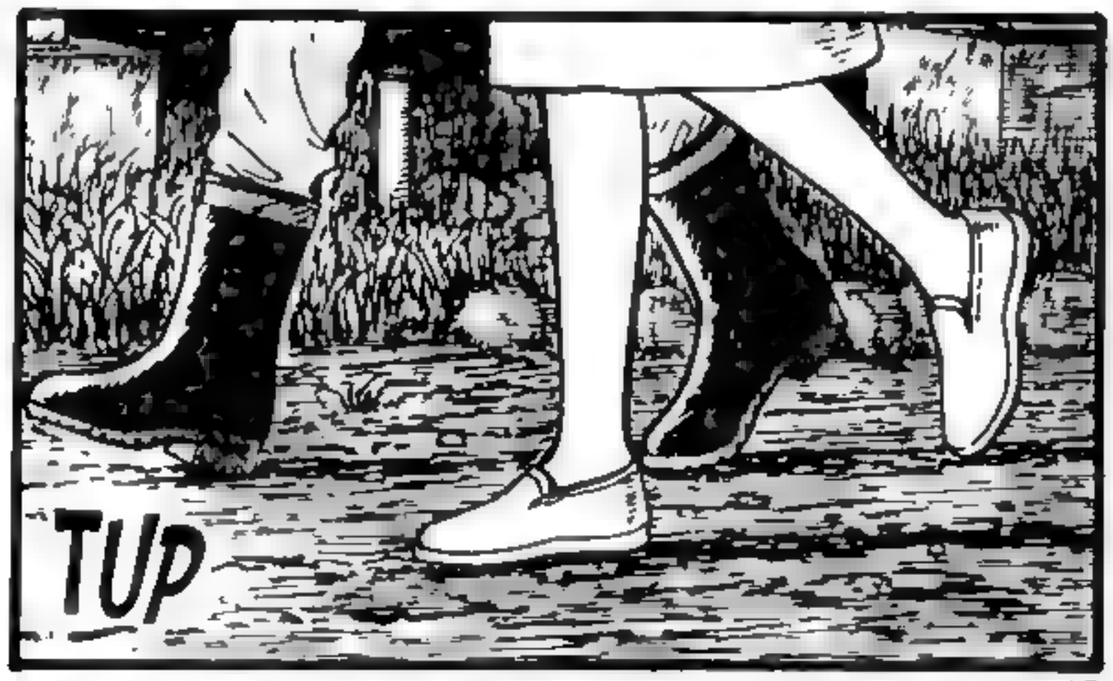
AIEEE!!

AND NOW...

...HE'LL COME BACK FOR YOU...



I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE DOING THIS...
SHUICHI...
W-WE HAVE TO... JUST TAKE ME TO HIS GRAVE...


TUP

17

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY WE WON'T GET CAUGHT.

WE CAN'T DIG HIM UP IN DAY-LIGHT.

IT'S TOO DARK...

BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S BURIED.

I'M GONNA HAMMER THIS STAKE INTO HIS HEART SO HE WON'T COME BACK TO LIFE!

ISN'T IT OBVI-OUS ??

...WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

BUT, UH...

NOTHING'S UNBELIEV-ABLE IN THIS TOWN!!

LOOK, WE'RE HERE BECAUSE WE BELIEVE A *TOY CLOWN* TALKED IN THE FIRST PLACE!

SO YOU BELIEVE WHAT THAT CLOWN SAID?

I DON'T THINK HE'S A *VAMPIRE*...

THIS MUST BE IT.

...HERE GOES.

O-OKAY...

GULP

SHNK

SHNK

SHNK

HUFF

UFF

HE CAN'T POSSI-BLY COME BACK TO LIFE...

THAT SMELL! THE BODY'S DECAY-ING!

I NEED THE CROW-BAR.

YOU NEVER KNOW.

UFF

HUFF

TA K

TAK

BANG

CREAK

WHAT WAS THAT?!

WHAM

THE PRESSURE FROM PULLING OUT THE NAILS MUST'VE POPPED THE CASKET WINDOW OPEN.

BANG

TAK

CREAK

WELL, STEP BACK THEN.

THIS IS UNBEAR-ABLE...

LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.

BAM

BAM

AIEE !!

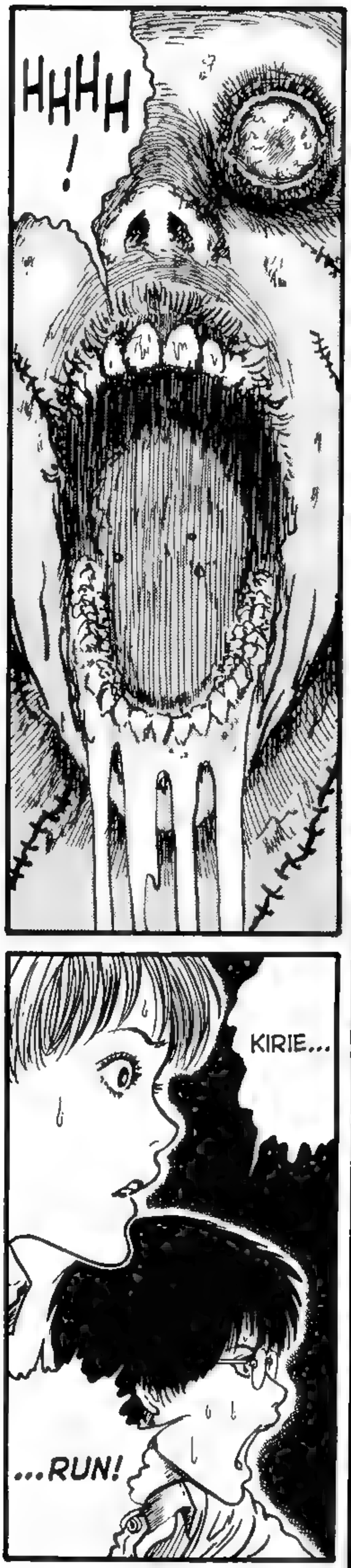
BHH

BB

BAM

CREEK

HHH


HHHH
!

KIRIE...
...RUN!

EEAA !!

SPUP

BWOM

WOOSH

NO!

BWOM

BWOM

HUFF HUFF

I...I DON'T KNOW!!

HOW CAN HE JUMP AROUND LIKE THAT?!

26

SHLAP

KOSH

PLAP

PLUP PLUP

CRICK

WHUD

AAHH !

WOOSH

SHLIP SHLIP

AAIEE !

BWOM

BWOM

HIS BODY'S SO ROTTEN IT'S FALLING APART!

WHUD

CRACK

WHACK

HUFF

HUFF

I THINK IT'S OVER...

HHHH!

EEYAA!!

BWOM

BWOM

BWOM

PLOP

WOOSH

LOOK!

SHUICHI !

BWOM

HIS SPINE'S BE-COME A SPRING !

WHAT THE HELL ?!

WOOSH

BLOW

IT WON'T STOP !!

KYAA A !!!

HHH!

BOING

TUM TUM TUM

FROM THE FRONT WHEEL OF THE CAR THAT KILLED HIM!!

THAT'S AN AUTOMOBILE SUSPENSION SPRING!!

IT WAS NEVER REMOVED FROM THE BODY!!

HUFF HUFF

...NEVER SURPRISED ANYONE AGAIN...

AND SO "JACK-IN-THE-BOX"...

CHAPTER

8

THE SNAIL

I HEAR IT'S GONNA LAST OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

IT HASN'T RAINED IN A WHILE.

SSSSS

YEAH, PROBABLY.

I BET KATAYAMA COMES TODAY.

IT'S REALLY POURING OUTSIDE.

HHHH

SSSS

FUNNY HOW HE ONLY SHOWS UP WHEN IT'S RAINING...

SSSSH

CREAK

THUK

CREAK

CREAK

I GOT UP EARLY... BUT IT TOOK A WHILE...

... SORRY I'M LATE.

MR. YOKOTA...

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT TIME IT IS, KATAYAMA?

THAT'S ENOUGH, TSUMURA!

WA HA HA!

IT TAKES HIM TEN TIMES AS LONG AS A NORMAL PERSON TO GET ANY-WHERE!

KATAYAMA'S THE ULTIMATE SLOWPOKE, SIR!

UH...

UM...

AND WHY DO YOU ONLY SHOW UP WHEN IT RAINS? DO YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST COME TO CLASS WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT?

KATAYAMA, YOU'RE SOAKING WET AGAIN! WHY DON'T YOU BUY AN UMBRELLA?

KATAYAMA REALLY IS SLOW.

TSUMURA CAN BE A JERK, BUT HE'S RIGHT.

ENOUGH! JUST GO TO YOUR SEAT!

WE'RE PLAYING VOLLEY-BALL!

HEY! FOURTH PERIOD GYM!

RIGHT ON!

DOING SSSH

SHAK

WHAT ARE YOU? A STATUE?!

HOLY CRIPES, SLOW-ASS!

TUMP

BOYS' LOCKERS

...

P- PLEASE... TSUMURA.

IF I FIND OUT YOU'RE MESSING WITH ME...!

YOU COST US THE GAME, YOU GLACIAL TURD!

DON'T TALK TO ME LIKE WE'RE FRIENDS !!!

S-STOP IT...!

STRIP HIM!

WHY DON'T WE CHANGE THEM FOR HIM?

GOOD IDEA!

YOU'RE EVEN SLOW CHANGING CLOTHES!

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!

AIEEEE !!

STOP IT!

DRAG HIM OUT HERE!

GET A GOOD LOOK!

WA HA HA HA!

SLUMP

HUH?

...SHINED ON KATA-YAMA'S BACK.

AN OMI-NOUS SPIRAL ...

SLUFF

SLUFF

SLUFF

HIS BACK WAS SO SWOLLEN...

...WE COULD ALL SEE IT.

TUES-DAY...

HUH?

KATA-YAMA, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR BACK?

... SORRY I'M LATE AGAIN.

MR. YO-KOTA ...

...

HUFF HUFF

LOOKS LIKE IT'S SWOLLEN UP.

THE WET CLOTH CLUNG TO HIS BACK...

D-DID YOU SEE THAT, KIRIE?

...SO YOU COULD SEE THROUGH HIS SHIRT.

YES ...

MUMBLE MUMBLE

...A SPIRAL RISING.

A SPIRAL ...

10

...A SNAIL.

HE LOOKS LIKE...

THIS IS CREEPY, KIRIE.

...SORRY I'M LATE.

MR. YOKOTA ...

SHAAA

WED-NES-DAY ...

THE GROWTH WAS BIGGER.

THUD

THURS-DAY...

SHUP

AAHH !

SHUP

SHUP

SHUP

K-KATA-
YAMA...

AIEE
!!

ARGH
!!

SLUP

SLUP

SLUP

LOOK!

THERE HE IS! UP ON THE WALL!

THE RAIN KEPT ON POURING.

FRI-DAY ...

HE'S CURSED BY THE SPIRAL...

HE'S CURSED...

LOOK AT THAT TRAIL HE'S LEAVING BEHIND.

THEY CALLED THIS MORNING. HE HASN'T BEEN HOME FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

CONTACT HIS PARENTS.

PRINCIPAL

SOMETHING MUST BE DONE.

THEY SHOULD BE HERE SOON.

WE ASKED HIS PARENTS TO COME GET HIM.

HE WAS PROBABLY HIDING IN THE HILLS.

HOW COULD HE GO HOME LOOKING LIKE THAT?

WELL, YOU SEE...

WHERE'S MY SON?

FSSSH

H-HE'S UP THERE.

W-WHAT?

FSSSS

THAT CAN'T BE OUR SON!

HIS FAMILY REFUSED TO TAKE HIM HOME.

WE'RE READY DOWN HERE.

WE'RE GOING HOME!

IS THIS SOME SICK JOKE?

BUT, BUT ...

THWUD

BAP BAP

THUP

SKLUK

KUCH

KUCH

EVENTUALLY THE SCHOOL TOOK CARE OF HIM.

TAP

TAP

TWIK

HE'S NOT HUMAN ANYMORE!!

GET OFF MY BACK! HE'S JUST A SLUG NOW!

STOP IT, TSUMU-RA!

WA HA HA! THIS IS GREAT!

LEAVE HIM ALONE!!

...KATAYAMA RETREATED INTO HIS SHELL.

WHEN THE RAIN STOPPED ...

GLUG GLUG

FSSSH

NOT REALLY... IT'S NOT THAT HOT.

AREN'T YOU GUYS THIRSTY?

WHADDA YOU MEAN?

YOU'RE GONNA DROWN DRINKING THAT MUCH.

WHAT'S THE RUSH?

WAIT UP, GUYS!

HEY, WAIT UP!

DING DONG

HUFF HUFF

I-I DON'T KNOW...

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE SO SLOW!

THEN TSUMURA STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL.

WHAT ?

WHY DON'T WE SPRAY HIM WITH WATER?

WELL, IT HASN'T BEEN RAIN-ING.

HE HASN'T COME OUT OF HIS SHELL.

WHAT IF HE SHOWS HIS FACE?

...WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?

MAYBE... BUT...

HE MIGHT DIE FROM DEHY-DRATION.

I DON'T WANT TO SEE THAT FACE ANY-MORE.

THAT'S PROBABLY WHY NOBODY GIVES HIM WATER.

SKWEEK SKWEEK

SHOOSH

YOU JUST TURN THE TAP ON.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT... I'LL HOLD THE HOSE.

BLUB

BLUB

BLUB

BLUB

FWUP

FUP

EEYAA!

SHLUUPP

TSUMURA HASN'T COME TO SCHOOL LATELY. IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S GONE MISSING.

LISTEN UP, EVERY-ONE.

FSSSH

DO YOU THINK...?

MUMBLE MUMBLE

HEY...

WHAT IF HE'S...?

MURMUR

IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE HE IS, I WANT YOU TO TELL ME.

MURMUR

FSSSH

FSSSH

...

AIEE!!

ON THE WINDOW!

EEYAA!!

IT'S NOT HIM!

NO, SIR!

DID KATAYAMA ESCAPE FROM HIS CAGE?!

SHHHH

HE'S BECOME A SNAIL TOO!

IT'S TSUMURA!!

...THEY'RE GETTING ALONG FINE.

BUT NOW...

TSUMURA WAS SUCH A BULLY.

HOW IRONIC.

EH?

WH... WHAT THE HELL...

IT LOOKS KINDA ODD...

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

SNAILS ARE HERMAPHRODITES!

THEY'RE *MATING!*

NO WAY! THEY'RE BOTH MALES!

THEY'RE... THEY'RE...

SNAILS CAN DIG LIKE THAT?

THEY DUG THROUGH THE GROUND.

SEVERAL WEEKS LATER THEY ESCAPED.

THEY'VE LEFT A TRAIL.

LOOK THERE.

...I'D SAY THEY CAN.

YES...

THE TRAIL LED US INTO THE HILLS...

LET'S FOLLOW IT.

WHAT IS IT?

REALLY?

SOME-THING'S BEEN BURIED OVER THERE.

HEY, LOOK!

LOOK !!

SHF SHF

JUST GIVE ME A SECOND.

I HAVE AN IDEA.

ONE OF THEM LAID EGGS!!

THEY'RE... MOLLUSK PEOPLE.

IT'S CLEAR THESE TWO BOYS ARE NO LONGER REMOTELY HUMAN.

TH-THEY LOOK LIKE TENNIS BALLS!

SKUPS

SNAILS ARE MOLLUSKS, SO...

MOLLUSK PEOPLE?

IT'S DISGUSTING, UNNATURAL! THESE CREATURES MUSTN'T BREED!

STAMP

STAMP

WHAT DO YOU THINK? I'M *CRUSHING* THEM!!

MR. YOKOTA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?

THERE...

HUFF HUFF

STAMP

STAMP

BUT WE NEVER FOUND ANY OTHER EGGS...OR OUR FORMER CLASSMATES.

AND WE HAVE TO FIND THOSE SNAILS.

THEY MIGHT HAVE LAID OTHER EGGS. WE HAVE TO FIND THEM!

CREAK

THIS TIME ...

FSSSH

A FEW DAYS LATER ...

MR. YOKOTA CAME TO CLASS...

SLURP

CHAPTER

9

THE BLACK LIGHT-HOUSE

ONE NIGHT THE LIGHTHOUSE ON THE CAPE OF KUROUZU-CHO...

...SUDDENLY EMITTED A BRIGHT, MESMERIZING GLOW.

IT SWIRLED LIKE A TORNADO OVER THE ROOFTOPS.

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR

...

ISN'T THAT OLD LIGHTHOUSE ABANDONED?

WHAT'S MAKING IT DO THAT?

HWOOOOOO

HERE IT COMES AGAIN...

WOOOOO

FOR A SECOND THE BEAM HIT US.

...

EVERY NIGHT AT DUSK...

...BURST FORTH FROM THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

EVERY NIGHT AFTER THAT THE LIGHT...

STOP BEING A BABY.

ROAR

IT'S LIKE A GIANT ROBOT SPITTING OUT A DEATH RAY!

KIRIE, ISN'T THAT LIGHTHOUSE COOL?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

AWW, MOM!

MITSUO, PROMISE ME YOU WON'T GO NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE.

THERE'S SOME-THING WRONG WITH IT.

YOU SHOULDN'T STARE AT THAT LIGHT.

IT MAKES ME FEEL DIZZY.

I DON'T LIKE IT EITHER.

WE'VE BEEN GETTING COMPLAINTS FROM RESIDENTS.

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, ANYWAY?

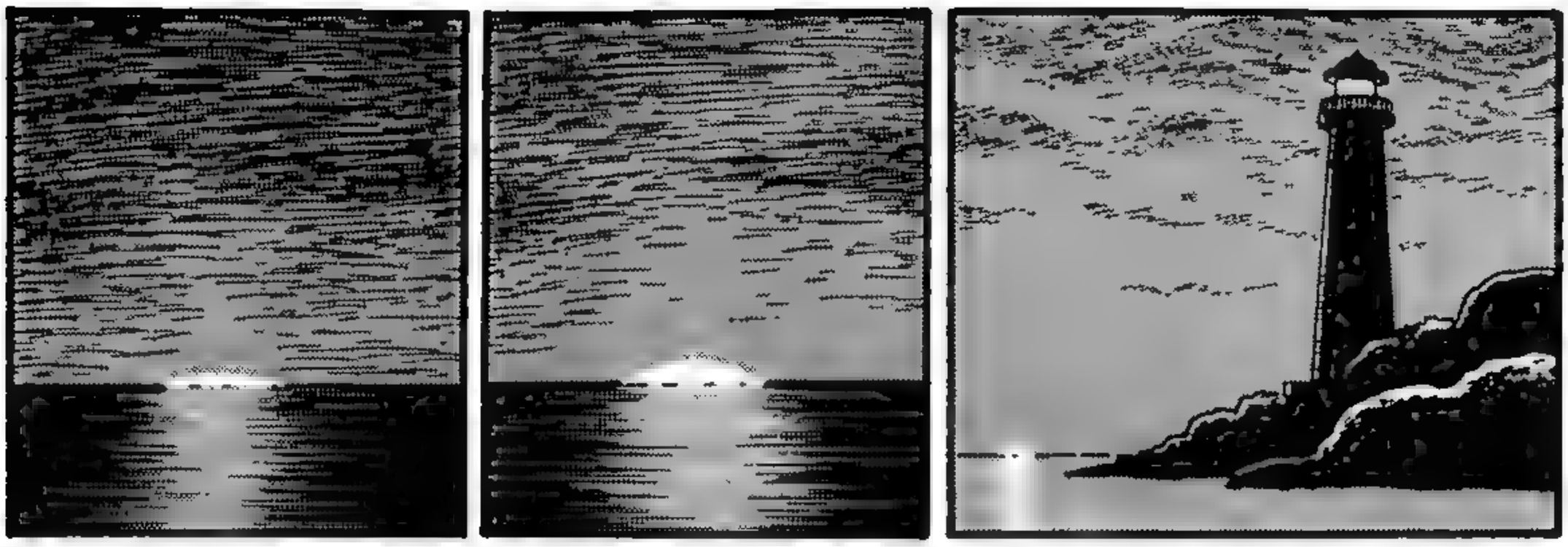
THIS LIGHT HAS LONG BEEN OUT OF SERVICE. IT SHOULDN'T EVEN HAVE POWER.

SCREE

KA-CHK

WE'LL GO INSIDE AND SEE WHAT'S WRONG.

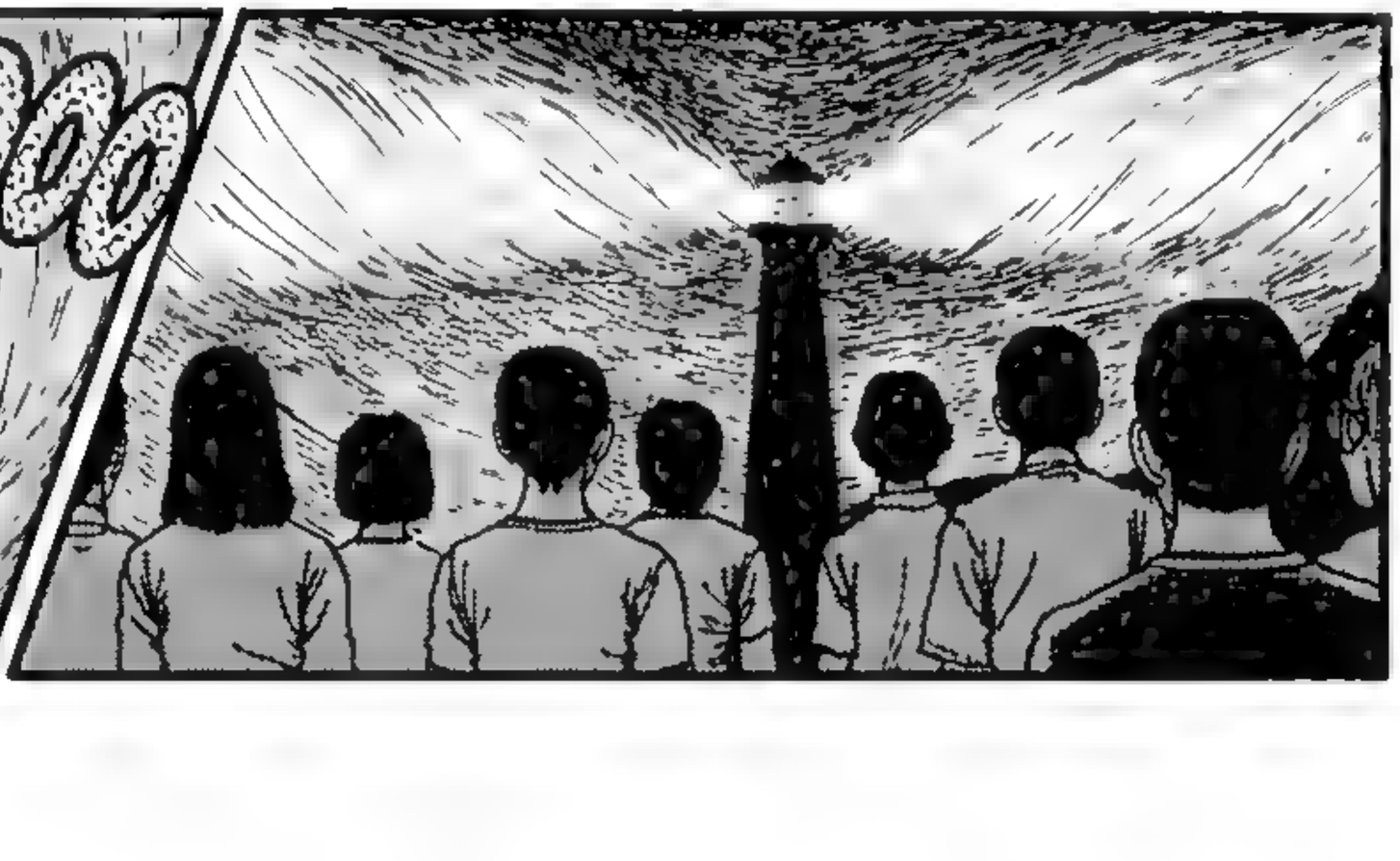
AFTER YOU.

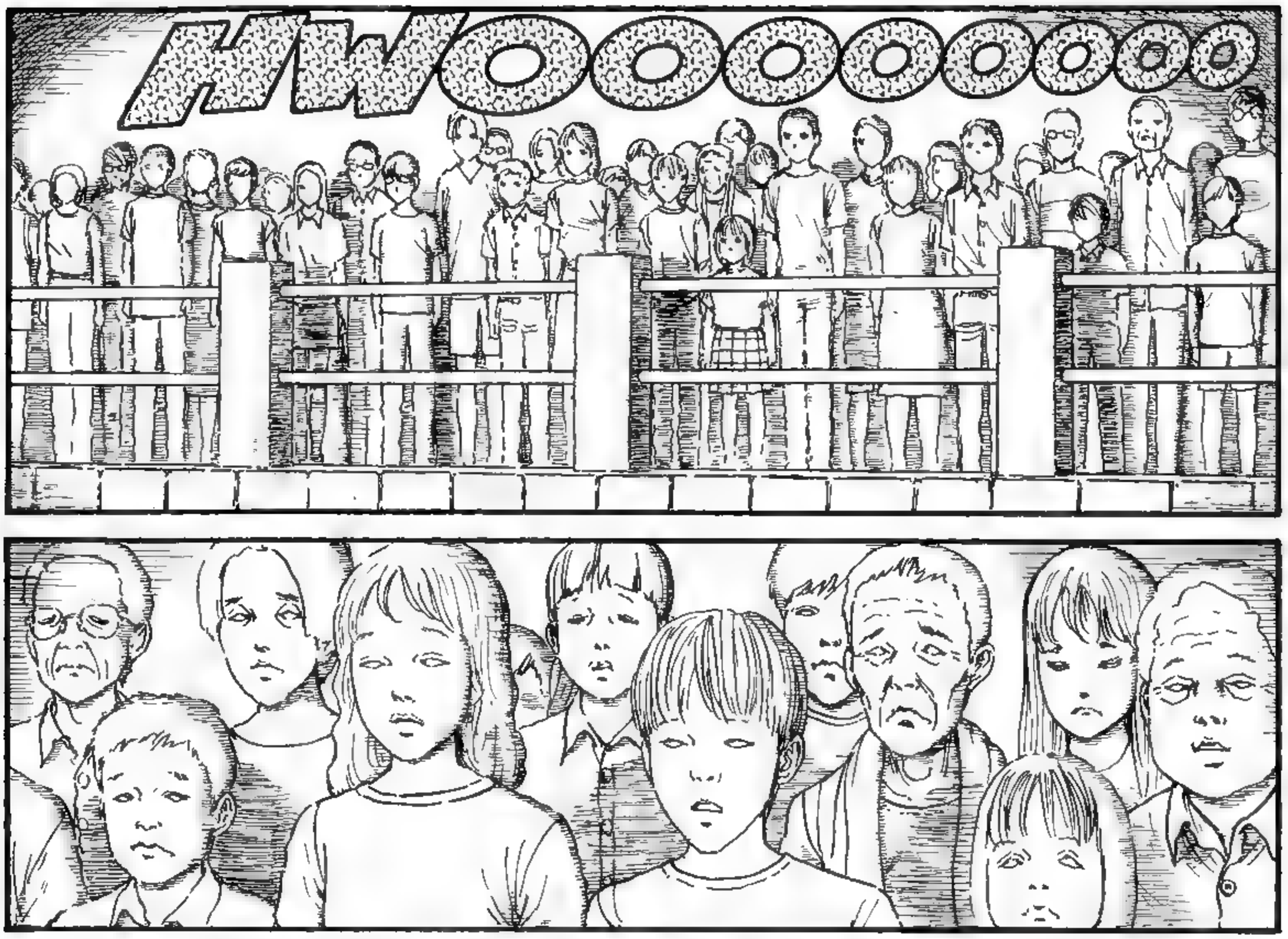


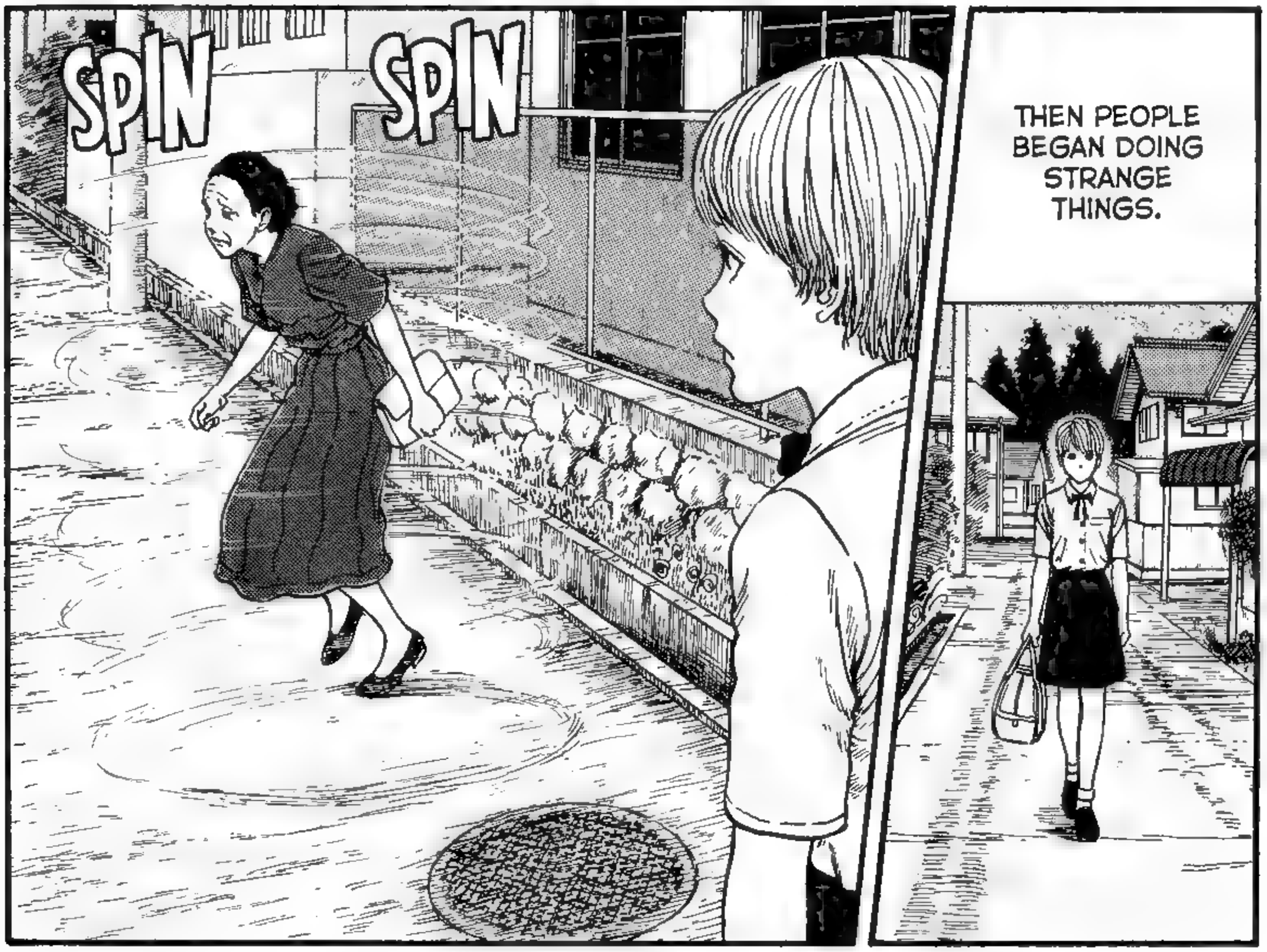
FLA SH

WOOOOOOO

WOOOO




HWOOOOOOOO


SPIN
SPIN
THEN PEOPLE BEGAN DOING STRANGE THINGS.

EXCUSE ME...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SPIN

SPIN

...BUT IT'S TAKING LONGER THAN USUAL.

HMM? I'M JUST WALKING HOME...

...

MURMUR

MURMUR

KURÔZU STATION

I CAN'T STOP!

PLEASE, SOMEONE HELP ME!

DUNNO, BUT HE'S BEEN AT IT AWHILE.

WHAT'S *HE* UP TO?

THAT SWIRLING LIGHT IS BURNED INTO MY EYES!!

IT'S THAT RAY FROM THE LIGHT-HOUSE!

LOOK OVER THERE.

WHAT IN THE...

...WHAT'S GOING ON?

OH GOD...

HUFF

HUFF

SHAAAAooo

THERE'S A FISHING BOAT STRANDED ON THE CAPE!

LOOKS LIKE IT HAP-PENED LAST NIGHT!

WHAT ABOUT THE CREW?

THEY SHOULD'VE SEEN THE LIGHT-HOUSE, TOO.

THAT'S WEIRD. THERE WASN'T ANY WIND.

BLAZE OF GLORY

SPEAKING OF MISSING... I HEARD THAT THE MEN WHO WENT TO CHECK ON THE LIGHTHOUSE HAVEN'T COME BACK...

THEY ALL EVENTUALLY FELL INTO THE OCEAN. ONE WAS RESCUED BUT TWO ARE MISSING.

APPARENTLY, AFTER IT RAN AGROUND, THEY WERE FOUND PACING THE DECK IN CIRCLES.

HEY!

WAIT FOR ME!

MITSUO, WE'RE GOING CLOSER!

YOU CAN SEE THE BOAT BETTER FROM THE CAPE!

DON'T GO THERE! IT'S DANGEROUS!!

NO!

SHAAA...

SHAAA...

DANG!

OR ELSE I'LL TELL MOM!!

MITSUO, COME DOWN HERE!!

LET'S CHECK IT OUT!!

HEY, LOOK! THE DOOR'S OPEN.

OKAY, OKAY.

MITSUO!

TMPTMP

YEAH!

STOP!

COME BACK!

MITSUO!

...

...

THAT'S IT...

COME DOWN HERE!

MITSUO !!

THESE STAIRS ARE AWE-SOME!

AHA HA HA!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

IT FELT LIKE THE STAIRS WENT ON FOREVER.

AS I WALKED FURTHER...

...SPIRAL PATTERNS APPEARED ON THE WALLS AND CEILING.

I'VE CLIMBED A LONG WAY...

I DON'T GET IT... WHERE AM I NOW?

THERE WERE NO WINDOWS, SO IT WAS THE ONLY LIGHT.

THEY GLOWED EERILY IN THE DARK.

HUFF

HUFF

THE LIGHTHOUSE HAS BECOME PART OF THE SPIRAL...

UHOOOO

UHOOOO

MITSUO !

I FEEL LIKE I'M JUST GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES.

THIS IS TOO STRANGE... I KEEP GOING, BUT I CAN'T REACH THE TOP.

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME PASSED...

I... I CAN SMELL... BURNING...

!

I MUST BE GOING CRAZY...

EEYA!

ARE THEY...

THEY'RE ADULTS ...

...THE ONES WHO WERE REPORTED MISSING...?

MITSUO? NO!

THREE BURNT BODIES...

MITSUO !!

AND MITSUO, WHAT...?!

HUFF

HELP !

MIT-SUO!

HELP!

AH!

HUFF

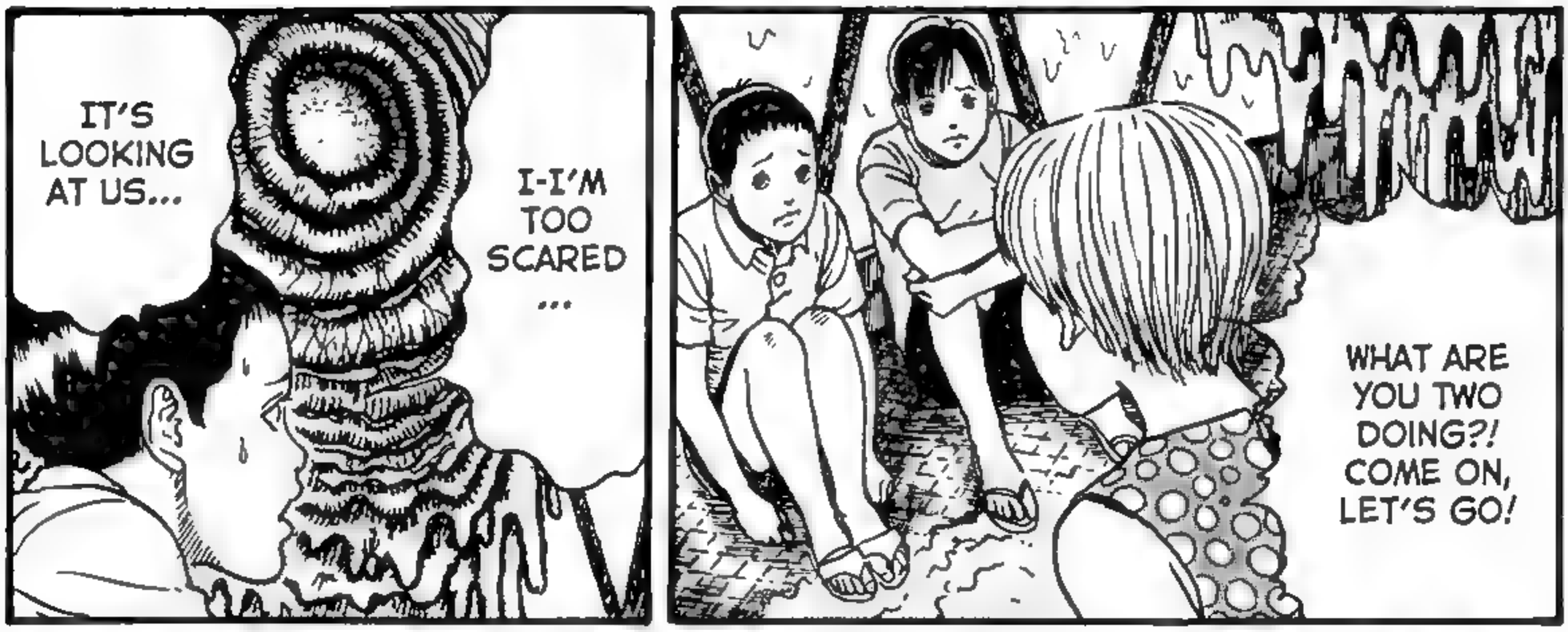
YOW!

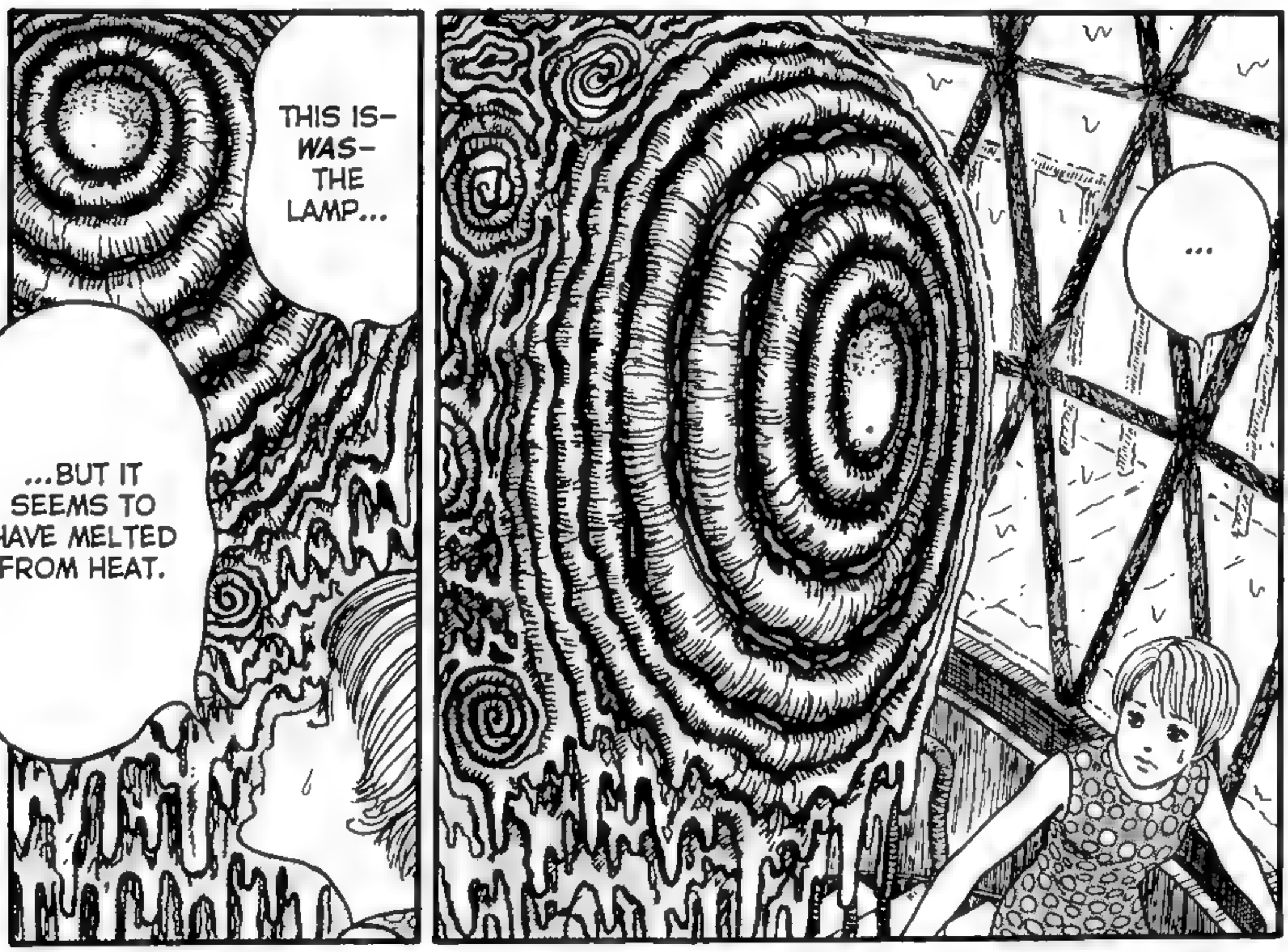
AT LAST...

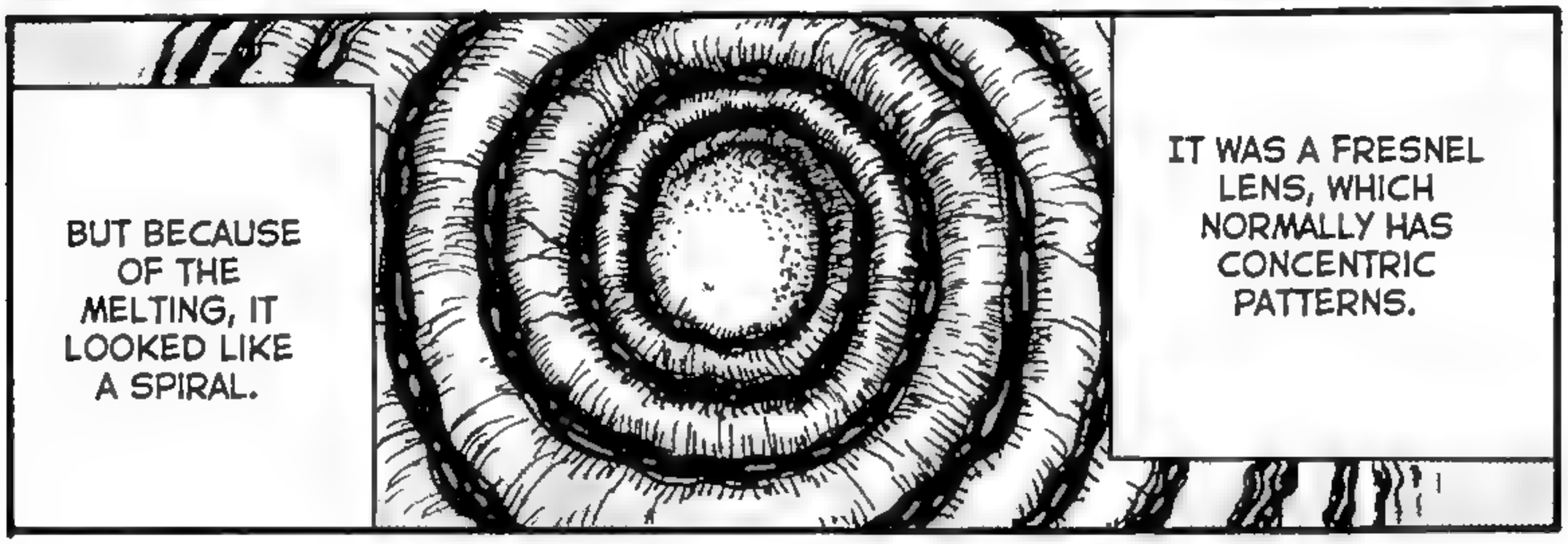
WERE THEY WITH THOSE MEN JUST BELOW? WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL OF THEM?

TWO MORE BODIES...

THEY WANTED TO SEE.
THEY KEPT GOING.
WHERE'S MITSUO AND THE OTHER BOY?
NOW! GO HOME!
TMP TMP
OKAY.
THEY WANTED TO SEE WHAT...?! LISTEN, YOU TWO GO DOWN-STAIRS.


IT'S LOOKING AT US...
I-I'M TOO SCARED ...
WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING?! COME ON, LET'S GO!


THIS IS- *WAS*- THE LAMP...
...BUT IT SEEMS TO HAVE MELTED FROM HEAT.
...


BUT BECAUSE OF THE MELTING, IT LOOKED LIKE A SPIRAL.
IT WAS A FRESNEL LENS, WHICH NORMALLY HAS CONCENTRIC PATTERNS.

AND THOSE BODIES...

...

...

NO!

IT'S LIKE THE ENTIRE ROOM LIQUE-FIED...

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

UH...I DON'T KNOW.

MITSUO!! WHAT TIME IS IT?!

IT'S ALMOST DUSK!!

OH NO!

THE LIGHT COMES ON AT SUN-DOWN! WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE BY THEN!!

GO DOWN-STAIRS *NOW!!*

RUN!

HURRY!

IF THE LIGHT CAN MELT GLASS, IT'S INCREDIBLY HOT! HOT ENOUGH TO...

THERE'S NOT A SECOND TO WASTE!

W-WHY?

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN?!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

JUST GO!!

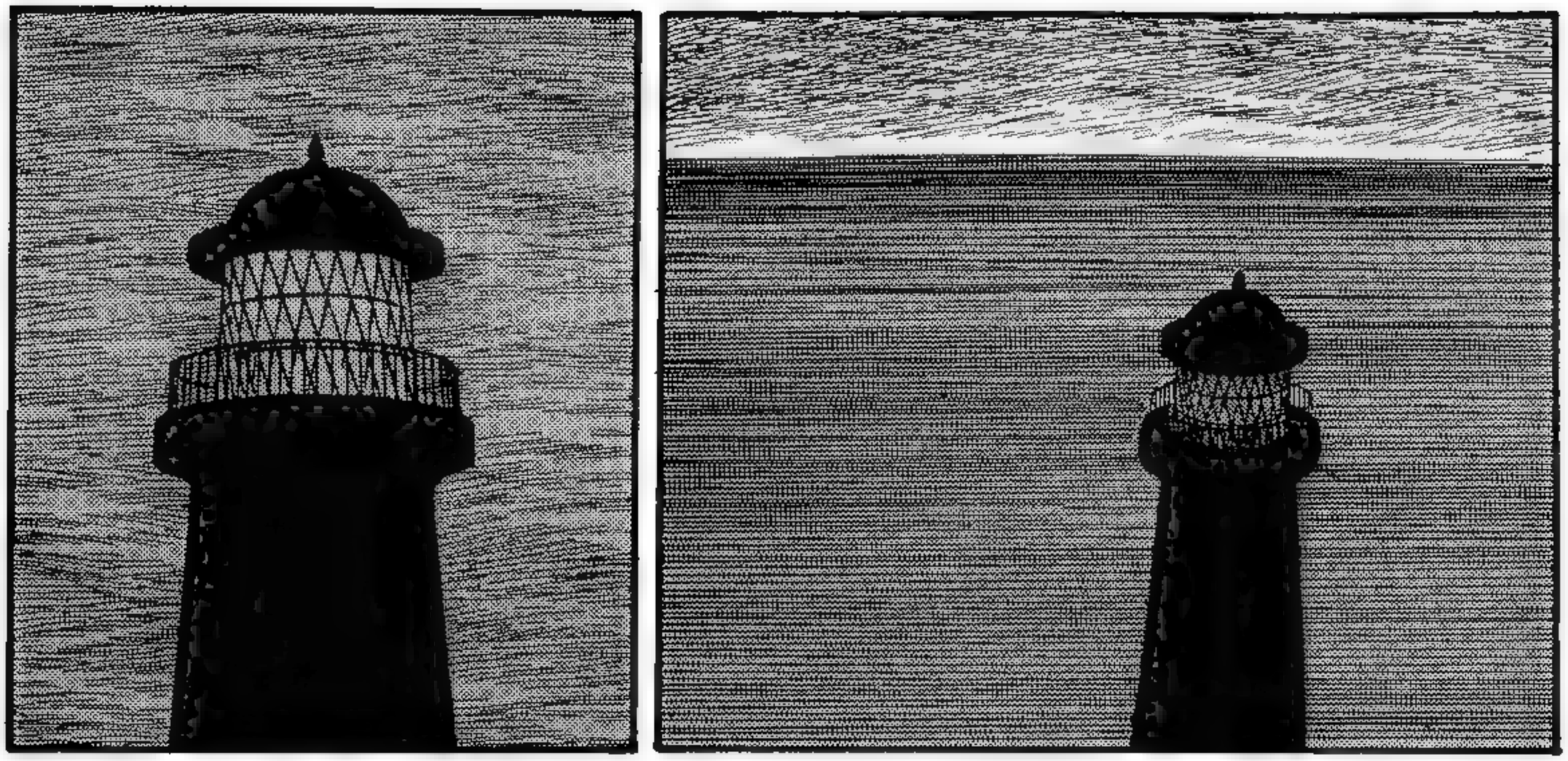
TRUP TRUP TRUP

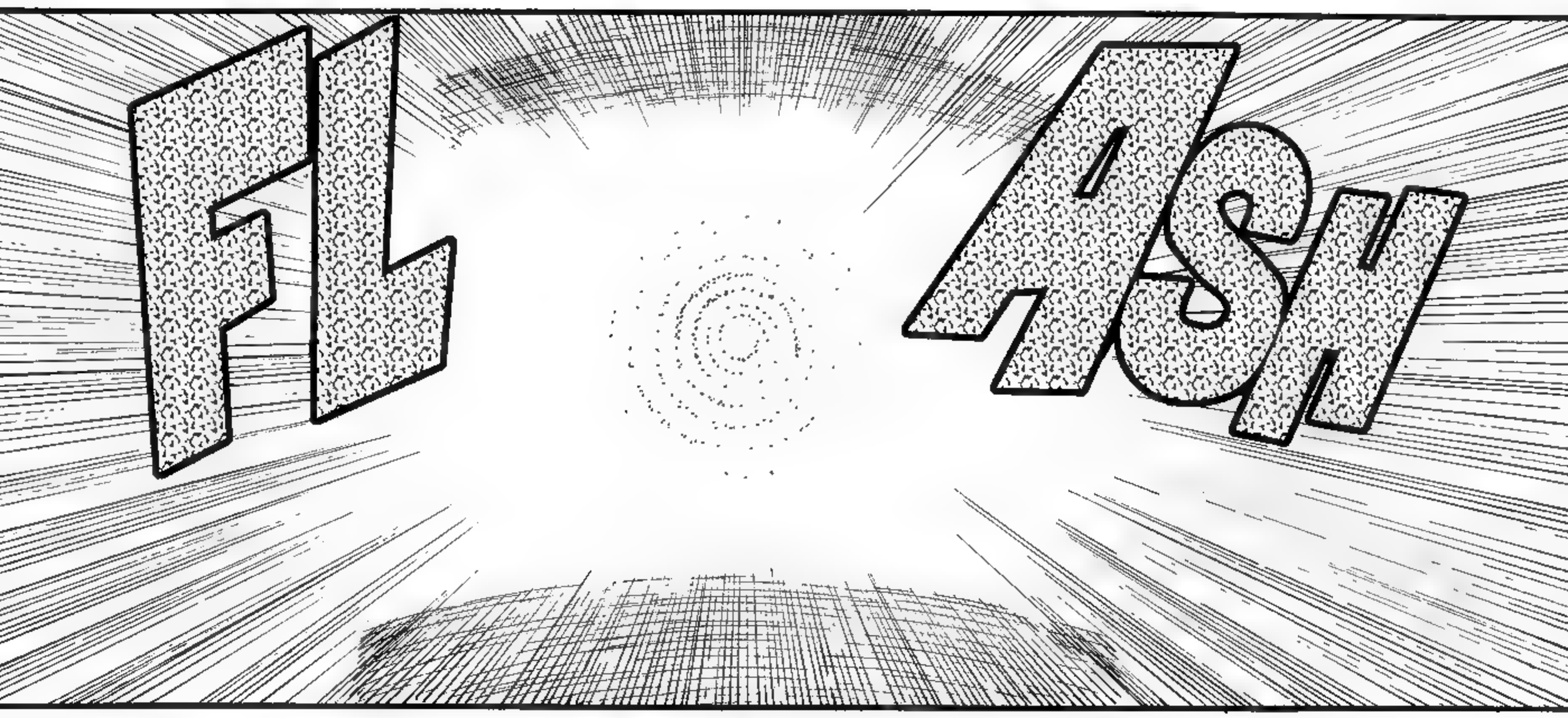
GO!

GO!

TRUP

I CAN'T RUN ANY FASTER!




FIRE

HOOO

W-WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!

HWOOOOOO

THE LIGHT!

THE HEAT IS COMING!!

IT'S COMING...

DON'T LOOK! *RUN!*

WHUD

!!

TRIP

UHH !

HWOO

AIIEE !!

HWOOO

...GO UP IN FLAMES.

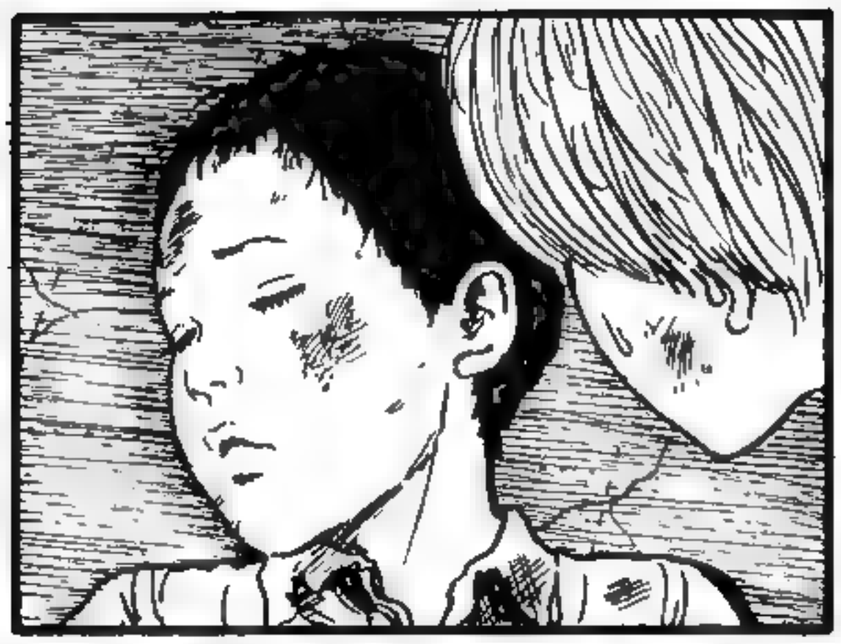
I SAW THE BOY...

WHERE ARE WE?!

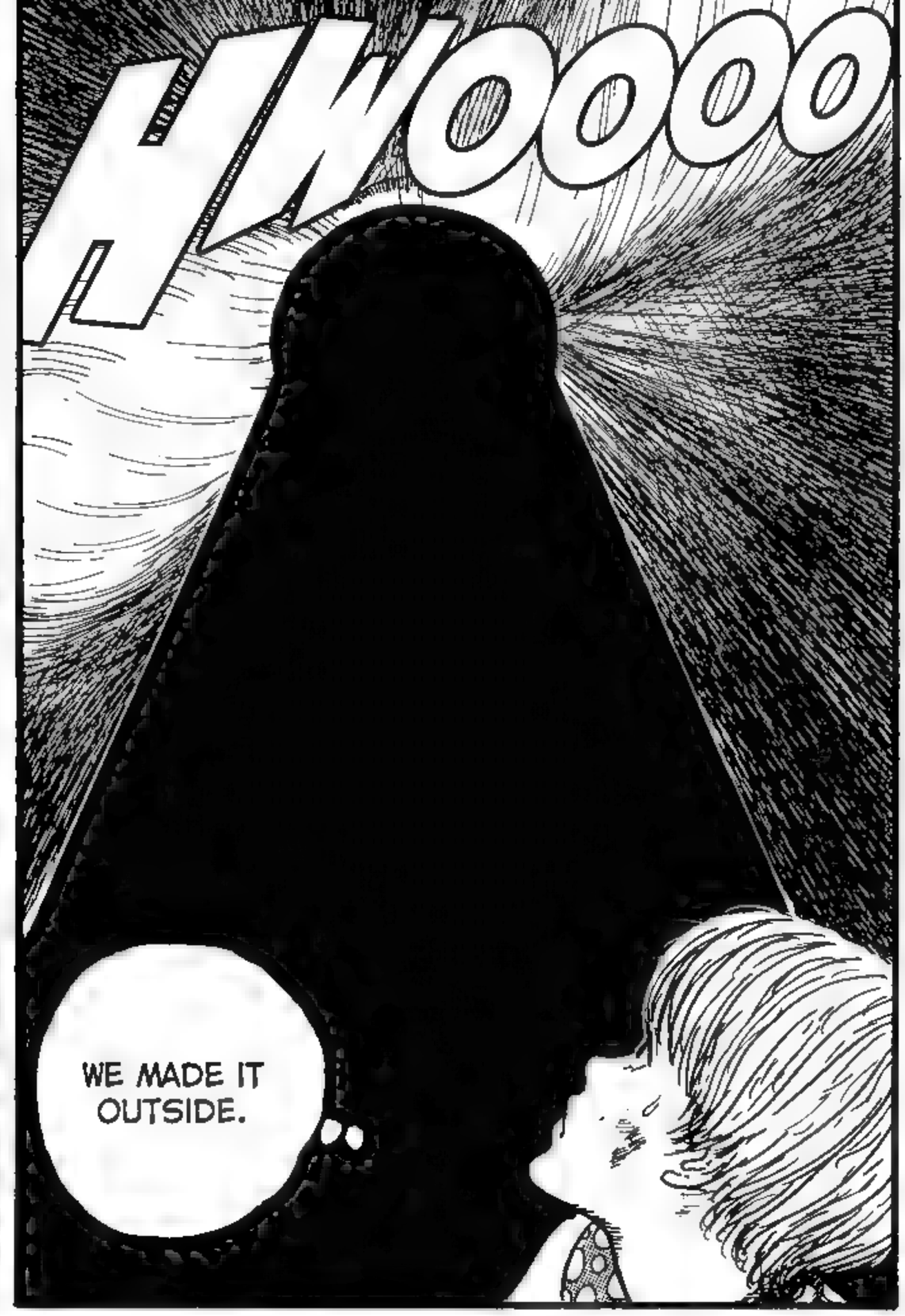
WHEN I AWOKE...

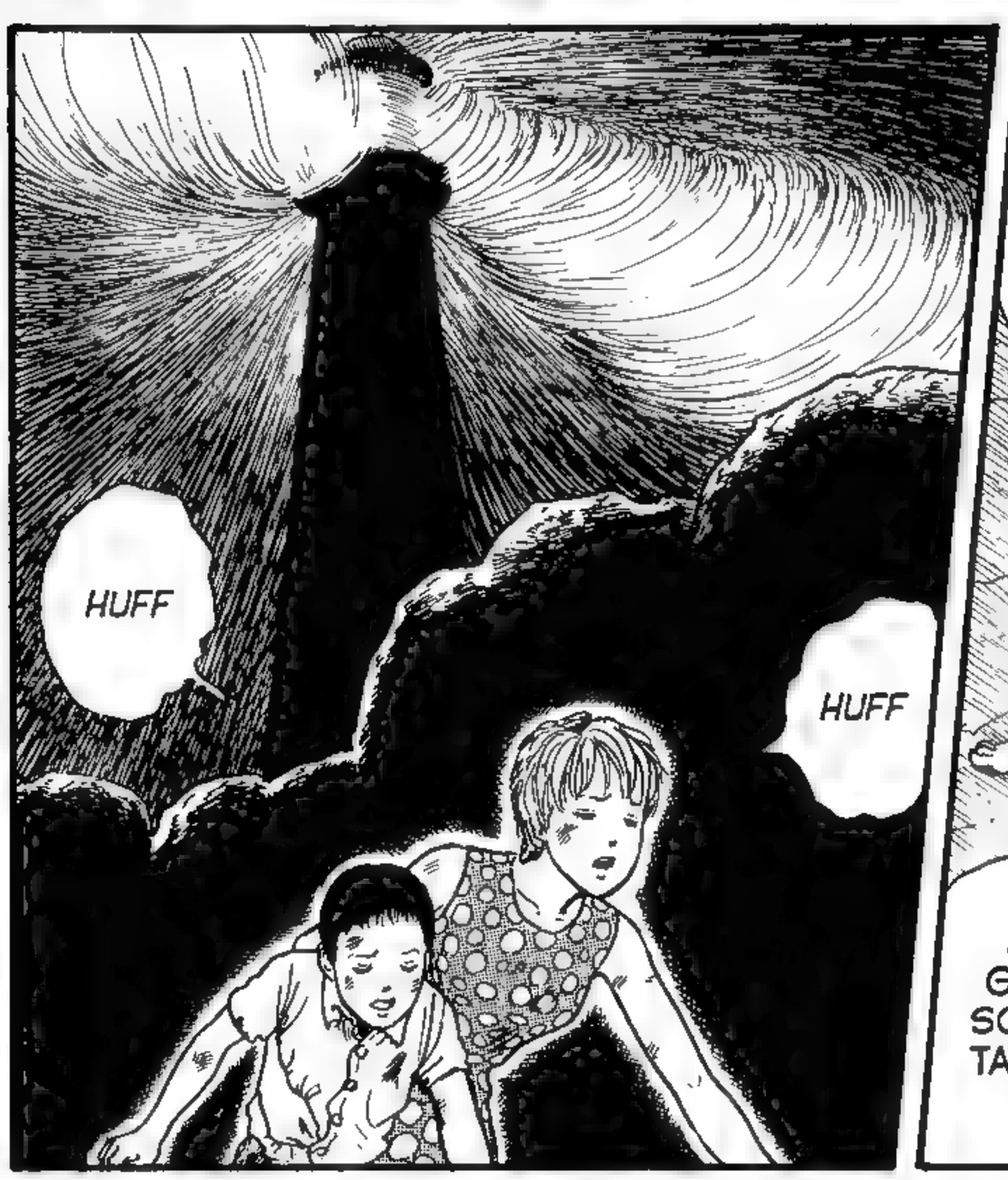
...BUT I REMEMBER NOTHING AFTER THAT.

THEN WE WERE BLOWN BACK BY A FIERY BLAST...



AA AA A
MITSUO !
MITSUO !


WOOOO
WE MADE IT OUTSIDE.


HUFF
HUFF

KIRIE, IT HURTS!
...LET'S GO HOME SO WE CAN TAKE CARE OF IT.
YOU WERE BURNED... SO WAS I... SO...

ONE OF THEM WAS THE BODY OF A BOY.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, SIX BODIES WERE DISCOVERED IN THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

THEY SAY THEY'LL DEMOLISH IT SOME-DAY...

AND STILL, EVERY NIGHT, THE LIGHT-HOUSE STREAMS FORTH A SWIRLING GLOW.

CHAPTER
10
MOSQUITOES

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

ZZEEE

ZZEEE

THAT SUMMER OUR TOWN SWARMED WITH MOSQUI-TOES.

205

Kirie Goshima

ZZEEE

MY BROTHER MITSUO WASN'T HURT AS BAD, SO HE WAS RELEASED AHEAD OF ME.

THE BURNS AND BRUISES I RECEIVED IN THE LIGHT-HOUSE WERE UNEXPECTEDLY SEVERE.

AS FOR ME, I HAD TO SPEND HALF THE SUMMER IN THE HOSPITAL.

BIG COMIC

ZZEEEE

WHUFF

WHUFF

GEEZ, THESE MOSQUI-TOES...

ZZEEE

NOT AGAIN.

...

ZZEEE

ZZEEE

JUST WATCHING THEM MADE YOU SLEEPY, AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNEW, YOU'D BEEN BITTEN.

THEY WOULD FLY IN DROWSY SPIRALS.

THAT YEAR THE LITTLE PESTS ACTED ODDLY.

ZZEEEE

IT STILL HURTS TO WALK. AND MY BURNS...

BETTER, I GUESS.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING, KIRIE?

UROUZU OSPITAL

...WHEN THE MOSQUITOES BITE, IT HURTS LIKE MAD.

ZZEEEE

IS THAT... A WHIRL-WIND?

OH! LOOK OVER THERE!

IT'S A MOSQUITO COLUMN.

THEY BREED IN DRAGON-FLY POND.

I'VE SEEN THEM A LOT LATELY.

...THE WAY THEY SPIN LIKE THAT ...

I DON'T KNOW IF I'D CALL IT A COLUMN...

ZZEEEE

"MOS-QUITO COLUMN"?

THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL IT WHEN THEY SWARM LIKE THAT. THEY'RE ALL MALE MOSQUITOES WAITING TO MATE.

IS THIS ANOTHER SIGN OF THE SPIRAL?

...SWIRLING AROUND AND AROUND...

?!

ALL RIGHT.

YOU LOOK TIRED. LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE BODY WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING...

CLACKATA CLACK

WEEOO

THAT MAKES ELEVEN WHO'VE BEEN HOSPITALIZED SUFFERING FROM MOSQUITO SWARM ATTACKS.

ANOTHER PREGNANT VICTIM?

LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER ONE.

EVERY-ONE'S UPSET ABOUT THE DEAD WOMAN. NOW WHAT?

THAT'S MY COUSIN KEIKO!!

CLACKATA-CLACK

WHAT?!

I FEEL...

OO...

OOOH...

Maternity Ward

OOH...

I JUST NEED TO REST. I THROW UP ANYTHING I EAT.

KIRIE...

KEIKO, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

STRANGE, THOUGH, SO MANY PREGNANT WOMEN BEING HOSPITALIZED.

WELL, I CAN'T SAY THAT IT'S NOT RELATED, BUT I THINK IT'S MOSTLY PSYCHO-LOGICAL.

NURSE, SHE'S BEEN BITTEN REALLY BADLY. IS THAT WHY SHE'S SICK?

SURE.

HER HUSBAND BROUGHT OVER HER BAG.

MS. GOSHIMA, COULD YOU UNPACK HER THINGS FOR HER?

?

PLEASE.

SHOULD I TAKE OUT HER TOWEL TOO?

OH...JUST LEAVE IT IN THE CUPBOARD.

KEIKO, WHAT'S INSIDE THIS CLOTH WRAPPING? IT'S HEAVY...

OKAY.

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

THERE ARE MORE DEAD IN ROOM 217!!

ONE OF THE PATIENTS IN ROOM 203 IS DEAD!!

WE HAVE AN EMER-GENCY !!

THE NEXT MORN-ING...

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

...THE OUT-BREAK OCCURRED IN THE HOSPITAL ITSELF.

JUST LIKE THE BODY FOUND OUTSIDE.

ALL DIED THE SAME WAY.

I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEIR BLOOD'S BEEN DRAINED OUT.

BUT DOCTOR... WHAT ARE THESE HOLES? ARE THEY STAB WOUNDS?

C-CALL THE POLICE!

ZZEEE

IT MUST'VE HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.

ZZEEE

...

ZZEEE

JUST THOSE MISERABLE MOSQUITOES BUZZING...

BUT I DIDN'T HEAR A SOUND LAST NIGHT

WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED? DID SOMEONE MURDER THEM?

I'M SORRY, I SHOULDN'T BE TELLING YOU THIS. YOU'VE GOT MORE THAN ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT, HUH?

THE HOSPITAL STAFF IS GOING CRAZY WITH PANIC.

Maternity Ward

KUROUZ HOSPITA

WOW! CAN I FEEL?

THE LITTLE MONSTER'S STARTED KICKING.

CAN YOU HEAR MY BABY MOVING?

IT'S OKAY, KIRIE. I'M DOING BETTER.

KIRIE, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

ZZEEEEEE

I FEEL LIKE I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN AGES.

I'VE BECOME SUCH A RECLUSE I HARDLY GO OUT ANYMORE.

GLANCE

YOU CAME TO SEE ME?

SHUICHI !!

MS. GOSHIMA ?

YES?

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG IN THIS PLACE.

GLANCE

KIRIE, YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT OF THIS HOSPITAL.

BUT WHY?

GLANCE GLANCE

THANKS, KIRIE.

GOOD.

THAT'S FINE.

WE DON'T HAVE ANY MORE BEDS IN THE MATERNITY WARD.

I'M AFRAID WE'LL HAVE TO ASK YOU TO SHARE YOUR ROOM.

SO YOUR COUSIN KEIKO WILL BE STAYING WITH YOU.

I GET A WEIRD FEELING FROM THAT WOMAN.

LISTEN, YOU CAN'T LET HER STAY.

SIT DOWN.

AAEEEE

...CAN YOU SAY THAT ABOUT MY COU-SIN?

HOW ...

...

PSSSH

SHUICHI!

SPRAY KILLER

PSSSH

YOU WON'T GET NEAR ME!

DAMN PESTS !!

DON'T YOU DARE SPRAY THAT IN THIS HOSPITAL!

HEY YOU!

SPRAY KILLER

FSSH

COUGH COUGH

URGHH ...

KIRIE, DID YOU KNOW...

F PP

PHEW ...

AND ONLY WHEN THEY'RE CARRYING A BATCH OF EGGS.

THEY NEED THE BLOOD SO THEIR EGGS WILL DEVELOP AND...

...THAT *FEMALE* MOSQUITOES ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO SUCK BLOOD?

SHFFFFF

YOU SHOULD LEAVE NOW!

COUGH COUGH

COUGH

THAT SMELL!

COUGH COUGH

OPEN THE WINDOW!

I'M SORRY. HE'S BEEN STRANGE LATELY.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, KEIKO?

HUFF ...

HUFF ...

NOW!

ZZEEEEE

THAT EVE-NING ...

KUROUZ HOSPITAL

I DON'T MIND THEM.

THANK YOU, BUT I'LL BE FINE.

BE CAREFUL IT DOESN'T BITE YOU.

ZEEEEE

THERE'S ANOTHER MOSQUITO IN THE ROOM.

I LIKE THEM, REALLY... A LOT...

WELL, YES... BUT...

BUT DIDN'T YOU GET SICK FROM A MOSQUITO ATTACK?

ZZZ

ZZZ

HMM...

EEEEEE

KUR
HOSI

EEEEEE

NOT IN HERE.

OUT IN THE HALL...

MOSQUI-TOES AGAIN...

EEEEEE

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

ZZEEEEEE

ZZZZEEEEEEEE

TUP TUP

ZZEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

TUP

TUP

TUP

EH?!

THEY'RE ALL FROM THE MATERNITY WARD.

TUP

TUP

WHAT... ARE THEY...

WHY ARE THEY ...?

AND WHAT'S WITH THE HAND DRILLS?

ROOMS WHERE PATIENTS ARE SLEEP-ING.

THEY'RE SPLITTING UP, GOING INTO DIFFERENT ROOMS.

SQUEE SQUEE SQUEE

SQUEE SQUEE SQUEE SQUEE

PLUP

NO!

NO ...

GSSS

HELP

GLUG

SAWW...

YOU...

AAAH!

SAW...

YOU...

AGH!

YOU SAW...

YOU SAW...

HO HO HO...

AHH!

HELP ME!

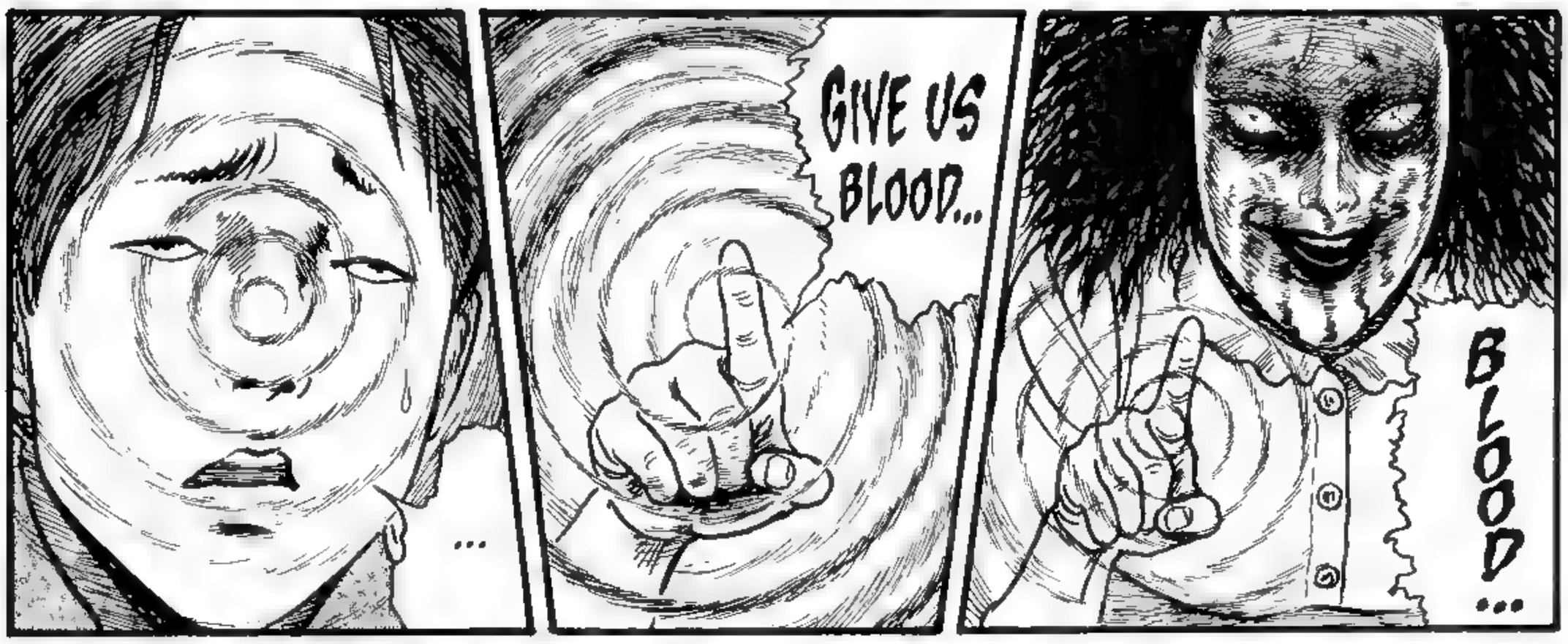
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON? IT'S LATE!

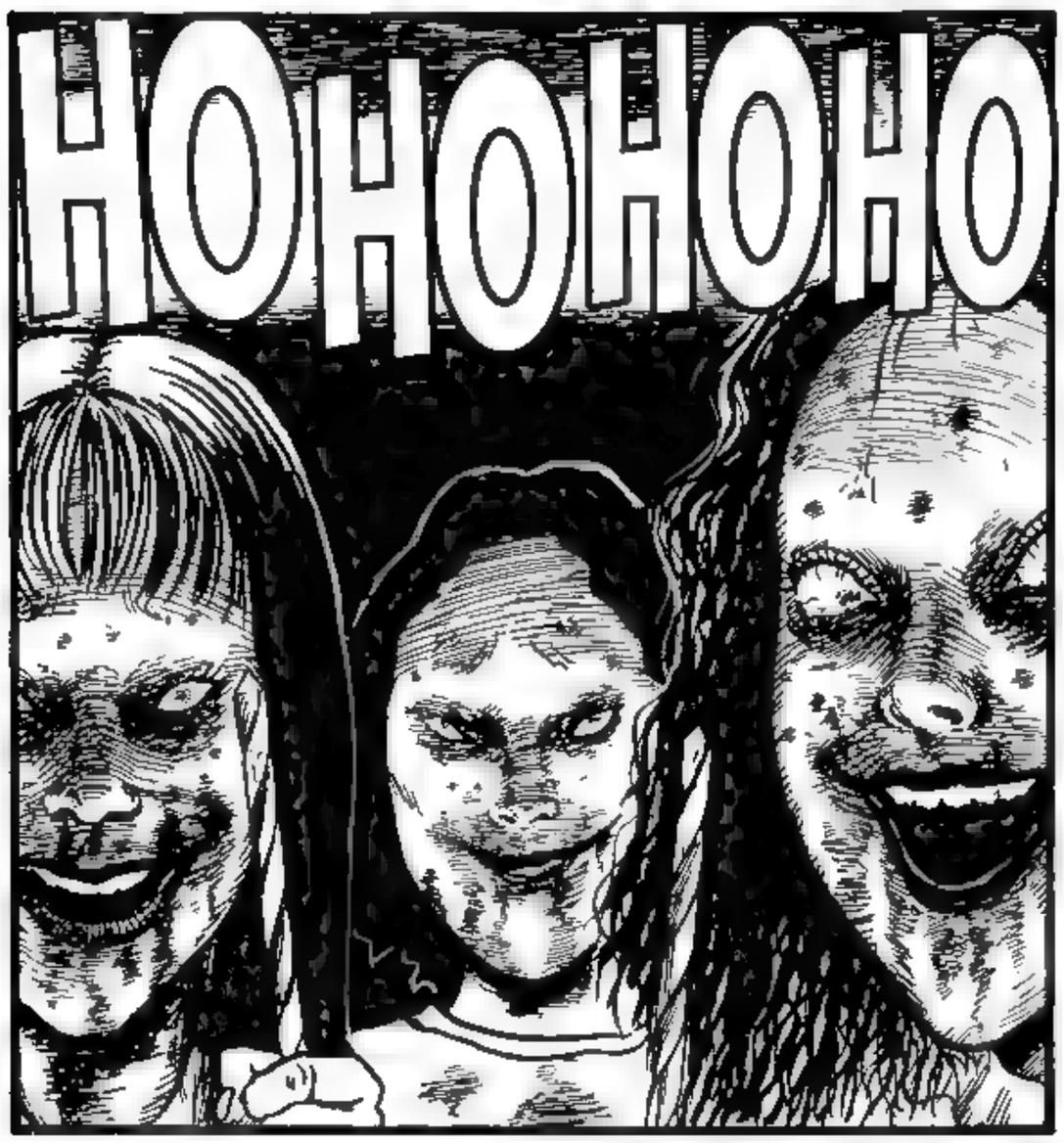
NO!

ACK!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

GET AWAY!


...
GIVE US BLOOD...
BLOOD...


HOHOHOHO

HID

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?

WILL YOU KEEP QUIET?

SQUEE SQUEE SQUEE SQUEE

EEYA!

GIVE US BLOOD!

WHAT ?!

SQUEE SQUEE

SQUEE SQUEE

GLUG

SHLIP

SLURP

GLUG

IT WAS SO GOOD...

THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT.

OH...

HO HO HO...

WAIT!

BACK TO SLEEP...

BACK TO OUR ROOMS...

THAT GIRL!!

A GIRL SAW IT...

SOMEONE SAW WHAT I DID.

HO HO HO...

HUFF HUFF

THEN WE CAN'T LET HER LIVE!

HUFF

HUFF

SLAM

HO HO HO...

CREAK

SHHP

I'LL DRILL THROUGH YOUR CHEEK AND OUT YOUR EYE!

HO HO HO! I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!

SOME-ONE HELP ME!

STOP IT!

KEIKO, WAKE UP!!

IT'S USELESS, GIRL.

OPEN THE DOOR.

HUH?!

KEIKO ?!

GIVE ME YOUR BLOOD...

BLOOD...

BAM!

UNH!

STOP IT!

HAHAHAHA

!

THUD

BUG SPRAY

DIE!!

PSSSSSSSSH

BUG SPRAY

HAHAHAHA

PSSSSSSSSH

HUFF

HUFF

THEY'RE ... GONE ...

SHUICHI'S BUG SPRAY DROVE THEM OFF.

TRUP TRUP TRUP

HNNGH!

TTEEE

I HATE TO THINK THEIR HUSBANDS TOOK CARE OF THAT.

ALL TRACES OF THE DRILLS AND BLOOD-SOAKED GOWNS HAD DISAP-PEARED THE NEXT MORNING.

KUROZU HOSPITAL

NO ONE SUS-PECTED THE MASSA-CRE...

...HAD BEEN COMMITTED BY PREGNANT WOMEN!

IN SEVERAL DAYS, THESE BABIES NOURISHED BY HUMAN BLOOD WOULD BE BORN!

THEY NEEDED RAW BLOOD FOR THEIR BABIES!

CHAPTER
11

THE UMBILICAL CORD

AGGHGGH!

Delivery Room

EEAGGGH!!

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

THE PREGNANT WOMEN AT KUROUZU HOSPITAL WERE APPROACHING THE END OF THEIR TERMS.

MY COUSIN KEIKO WAS THE FIRST TO GO INTO LABOR.

Delivery Room

I KNEW... AND NO ONE BELIEVED ME.

KEIKO'S BABY HAD FED ON HUMAN BLOOD.

EEEAAHH!

I WAS AFRAID TO WATCH.

EVERY PREGNANT WOMAN AT THE HOSPITAL HAD MURDERED PATIENTS AND DRUNK THEIR BLOOD.

...I TOLD MY STORY TO THE DIRECTOR AND DR. KAWAMOTO, THE HEAD OF THE MATERNITY WARD.

AFTER THE NIGHT OF THE MASSA-CRE...

MISS GO-SHIMA... YOU JUST HAD A BAD DREAM.

IT'S TRUE! THOSE WOMEN DID IT! IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, THEY'LL KILL AGAIN!

...THE MORE THEY LOOKED AT ME LIKE I WAS CRAZY.

THE MORE I TRIED TO MAKE THEM LISTEN...

I WAS ALONE.

HOW COULD YOU ACCUSE KEIKO OF DOING SUCH A HORRIBLE THING?!

KIRIE! THAT'S RIDICULOUS!!

EVEN MY FAMILY ...

PERHAPS DUE TO THE MOUNTING POLICE INVESTIGATION, THERE WERE NO OTHER ATTACKS.

OF COURSE, THE PATIENTS WERE ALL TERRIFIED BECAUSE THE MURDERER WAS NEVER FOUND.

...COMING FROM THE BATHROOM, AND CAUGHT ONE FEEDING.

SLURP

SLURP

ONCE I HEARD A STRANGE SOUND...

EH?

THEY STILL DRANK BLOOD IN SECRET.

BUT IT WASN'T OVER.

YOU SAW...

IT WAS KEIKO.

AAAA

EEAAEEAAH...

AAGH!

OHH...

AGH!

AHHH...

URGGGH...

ONE MORE PUSH!

WAAAH...

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

WAAAH...

WAAAH...

Delivery Room

A BABY GORGED WITH HUMAN BLOOD...

I WONDER WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.

SO IT'S BEEN BORN.

Nursery

IT WAS THE SWEETEST BABY I HAD EVER SEEN.

Keiko Nakayama

COO, COO?

OH, WHAT A DEAR!

WHAT A CUTE BABY!

HE'S SO KEY-UUUTE!

GAH GAH!

Nursery

AAGH

THE BABIES CAME ONE AFTER ANOTHER.

Delivery Room

EEYAA

Hisako Ume
Midori Sugiyama
THEY'RE ALL SWEET THINGS.
LOOK AT THOSE FACES.
THANK YOU, DOCTOR.
YOU CAN BE DISCHARGED ANYTIME.
Orthopedics
YOU'RE FULLY RECOVERED, MISS GOSHIMA.
HEE HEE... OH MY...
HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!

YOU FLATTER US!

OH, DOCTOR KAWAMO-TO!

IT'S BEEN AN HONOR TO HAVE HELPED BRING YOUR BABIES INTO THE WORLD.

IN ALL MY YEARS HERE, I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH WONDERFUL NEWBORNS.

KIRIE...

THERE YOU ARE, KEIKO.

IT'S MAKIO. MAKIO, SAY HI TO COUSIN KIRIE.

OH! I HAVE A NAME FOR THE BABY.

I'M GLAD YOU'RE ALL BETTER.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M GOING HOME.

HM?

HE'S SO CUTE.

...

GOO GOO...

IS SOME-THING WRONG WITH MAKIO?

UMM... KEIKO?

HIS TUMMY'S PUFFED UP.

!

...

THEY'RE ALL LIKE THAT.
...

BUT THEY LOOK SWOLLEN ...

UMM... KEIKO? ...

THEY'RE JUST WEAR-ING BELLY BANDS.

OH... OH, THAT. IT'S OKAY.

AAWAAA!

URR

HUH?

AAAWAAAA!

THAT SOUND!

IT'S PIERCING MY EARS!

AAWAAAA!

AAWAAA

UNF!

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

13

GETTING HURT ALL OVER AGAIN!

205

Kirie Goshima

BUT SHE'LL HAVE TO STAY ANOTHER WEEK.

AT LEAST SHE DIDN'T BREAK ANY-THING.

YOU'RE REALLY SOME-THING, YOU KNOW THAT?

I KEEP HEAR-ING THEM.

NO... IT'S THOSE BABIES CRYING.

THE SOUND'S SPINNING IN MY HEAD.

THEY KEEP RING-ING.

DOC-TOR... IT'S NOT MY LEG... IT'S MY EARS.

WAS IT FROM THE FALL?

YOUR EARS ?

CREAK CREAK

ARE YOU REALLY ALL RIGHT?

KIRIE?

YES...

CAN YOU SIT UP?

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

TRY THE MUSHROOMS, THEY'RE DELICIOUS.

DINNER TIME, MRS. GOSHIMA.

MUNCH MUNCH

MUSH-ROOMS ?

WHAT'S THIS?

THEY TASTE LIKE MEAT.

DON'T BE SO FUSSY, DEAR.

ARE THESE REALLY MUSH-ROOMS?

URM...

...

WHAT *ARE* THESE MUSHROOMS? THEY'RE SO GOOD!

THANK YOU!

THE STRANGE FUNGUS BECAME A REGULAR INGREDIENT IN THE HOSPITAL MEALS.

I NEVER ATE THEM.

THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE GOOD FOR YOU.

THAT'S WHAT DOCTOR KAWAMOTO SAYS.

THOSE MUSHROOMS ARE SO TASTY!

I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE CALLED?

I CAN'T GET ENOUGH! I WANT *MORE!*

THEY'RE JUST YUMMY!

OH, WHO NEEDS A DOCTOR'S SAY-SO?

I DON'T FEEL GOOD.

...

MY EARS ARE STILL RING-ING...

MURMUR MURMUR...

MURMUR MURMUR...

MURMUR MURMUR...

Nursery

MURMUR MURMUR...

THE WATER THERE WAS LIKE HEAVEN.

YES...BACK TO THAT WARM, SAFE PLACE.

IT'S SO COLD HERE.

I WANT TO GO BACK.

Yuko Konish

CAN WE REALLY GO BACK?

Yamad

THE WOMB IS WONDERFUL.

I WANT TO GO BACK TO THE WOMB.

IF HE TOOK US OUT, HE CAN PUT US BACK IN.

OF COURSE. DOCTOR KAWAMOTO WILL DO IT.

UH OH... I'M GETTING SO EXCITED, MY BELLY'S RISING...

PPP

I HOPE MY TURN WILL COME SOON.

HE'LL BE THE FIRST.

RIGHT NOW, MAKIO IS BEING RETURNED.

PING

HEE HEE...HOW SILLY...

...SEEING THINGS...

I'M HEARING THINGS ...

I-I...

Yuko Konishi

OH GOD!

Delivery Room

GYAAH!

EEYAGH!

Delivery Room

"MAKIO IS BEING RE-TURNED"?

THAT'S KEIKO'S VOICE!

WHAT?!

SCREEK

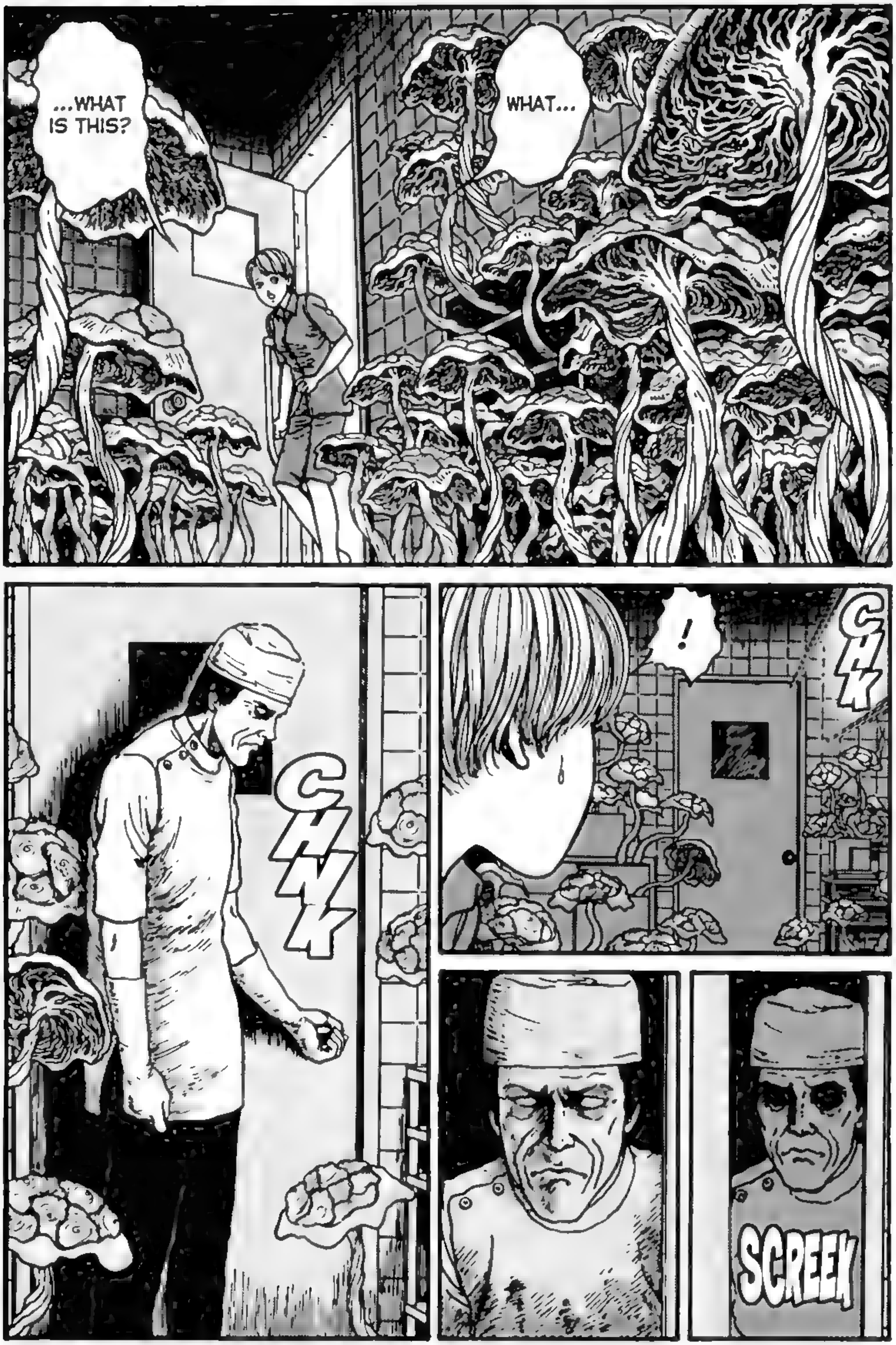
DOC-TOR!!

TUMP TUMP

KEIKO !!

CHK

CHK CHK


...WHAT IS THIS?
WHAT...
CHK
!
CHK
SCREEK

DOCTOR KAWAMO-TO!

WHERE IS MAKIO?!

IS SHE HERE?!

I JUST HEARD KEIKO'S VOICE.

?

ALL BABY MAM-MALS ARE "CUTE."

...

THEY USE IT TO INFLUENCE ADULTS... GET ATTENTION...

...BECAUSE THEY NEED US TO SURVIVE.

IT'S A WEAPON USED BY INFANT CHILDREN.

THE PROOF IS...

BUT NOT *THEM*... NOT ONLY DO THEY NOT WANT TO BE INDEPENDENT... THEY WANT TO BE BABIES... NO, THEY WANT TO BE FETUSES FOREVER.

BUT THE CHILD EVENTUALLY GROWS UP AND BECOMES INDEPEN-DENT.

THOSE SWEET CHILDREN WANT TO RETURN TO THEIR MOTHERS' WOMBS!

THE UMBILICAL CORD AND THE AFTER-BIRTH... THEY SIGNIFY A YEARNING FOR THE WOMB!

YOU CUT AND CUT, BUT *THEIR* CORDS GROW BACK... EVEN REGROWING THE PLACENTA!

...THE UMBILICAL CORD.

THEY'RE NOT MUSH-ROOMS.

UH HUH ...

...THESE MUSH-ROOMS...

THEN ...

THE PLACENTAS TOOK ROOT WHERE WE DROPPED THEM AND STARTED TO GROW.

AFTER WE DELIVERED THE BABIES, THESE ORGANS SPROUTED ON THEIR OWN.

AS A DOCTOR, YOU SEE.

AND IT WAS DELICIOUS! IT REVITALIZED ME!

I HAD TO TRY ONE.

...AND NOW, JUST LOOK AT THEM!

AND NOW...

D-DOCTOR!

IF IT WAS FED TO THE SICK, WOULDN'T THEY GET BETTER?

IT MAKES SENSE. ALL MAMMAL LIFE SPRINGS FROM THESE ORGANS.

YES...THE MOTHER AND CHILD ARE IN THAT ROOM.

...IS KEIKO IN THERE?

D-DOCTOR ...

THE PROCE-DURE WENT WELL.

IT'S OKAY.

I HEARD SCREAM-ING!

WHAT...WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU DO TO THEM?!

AHH!

LET ME THROUGH!

PROCE-DURE ?!

CHK

HHH

HHH

HHH

HHH

KEIKO...

YES, IT WENT WELL.

THE CHILD HAS BEEN RE-TURNED TO ITS WOMB.

BLOOD... I NEED BLOOD...

DOC-TOR... DOC-TOR KAWA-MOTO ...

ONE THING I DO KNOW IS THAT SHE WILL ONCE AGAIN HAVE TO PROVIDE IT WITH NUTRITION...

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE BABY NOW.

LET ME GO!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING !?

NO!

LET ME GO!

TUG

KEIKO!

HERE... HERE!

HURRY... GIVE ME...

WSSSH

NO!

SHUK

SHI

GYAAAH!

HUFF

HUFF

MORE...
I NEED MORE!

EYAAA!

THIS MUST BE WHERE THEY COME FROM!

OHH... LOOK AT ALL THE MUSH-ROOMS!

CHOMP

LET'S EAT!

PLEASE HELP ME!

LOOK HOW MANY THERE ARE!

I ESCAPED FROM THE HOSPITAL.

KUROUZU HOSPITAL

I'VE NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED THERE AFTER THAT. I WASN'T ABOUT TO GO BACK AND FIND OUT.

EE YAA!

SHHK

CHAPTER
12
THE STORM

SHAAAAAAAAA

SHAAAAA

SHAAAAAAAA

SHAAA

...IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU I'D HAVE DIED A LONG TIME AGO...

Y'KNOW, SHUICHI ...

HWOOOOOO

HWOOOOOO

SHAAA

HHWWOOOOOOOO

HWOOOOO...

HWOOOOO

WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

TY-PHOON SEA-SON!

IT'S HERE... *IT'S FINALLY HERE!*

HWOOOO

A STORM'S COMING!

IT'S THE WIND!

...

TYPHOON! *TYPHOON!*

WHAT?

HWOOOOOOO

TRUP TRUP TRUP

A TYPHOON'S COMING!

A TYPHOON'S COMING!

TYPHOON!

WHAT A FREAK!

TYPHOON!

BOARD YOUR WINDOWS!

TYPHOON!

THE "EYE" OF THE STORM IS VISIBLE DUE TO ITS SMALLER THAN NORMAL DIAMETER.

THIS HURRICANE IS REPORTED TO BE SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL.

THE JAPAN WEATHER ASSOCIA-TION HAS ISSUED A HURRICANE WARNING FOR KUROUZU-CHO...

HURRICANE NO. 1 IS MAKING ITS WAY NORTH AND SHOULD PASS THROUGH KYÛSHÛ, SHIKOKU AND SOUTHERN KANSAI OVER THE WEEKEND.

WE'VE SEEN ABNORMALLY CALM WEATHER SO FAR THIS SUMMER...

...BUT GET OUT YOUR SHUTTERS AND RAINCOATS.

HWOOOOO

DON'T BE SILLY, A HURRICANE DOESN'T REALLY HAVE AN "EYE."

HEY, KIRIE, I WONDER WHAT A HURRICANE'S EYE LOOKS LIKE?

HWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

YOU SHOULD COME DOWN NOW...IT'S GETTING DANGEROUS.

YEAH.

TUNK

TUNK

HWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

I JUST HAVE TO DELIVER SHUICHI'S LUNCH.

I'LL BE ALL RIGHT, MOM.

KIRIE! DON'T GO OUT NOW!

THE HURRICANE'S COMING!

HWOOOOOOO

HWOOOOOO

FWOM

EEK!

AH!

...THE EYE OF THE STORM?!

IS THAT...

HWOOO

HYUUUUUUUUU

HWOOOO

THAT NIGHT ...

OO

HYUUUUUUU

HYUUUUU

HYUUUUUUUUUU

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

KIRIE

HWOOOOOOOOOOOOO

POO-TEE-WEET

POO-TEE-WEET

YAWWN

POO-TEE-WEET

MMN ...

POO-TEE-WEET

POO-TEE-WEET

HM ...

GUESS THE STORM'S OVER.

I WONDER WHAT THAT SOUND WAS LAST NIGHT?

IT SOUNDED LIKE THE WIND WAS HOWLING MY NAME...

SHFF

WELL, IT'S GONE ANYWAY.

GUESS I WAS HEARING THINGS.

...LIKE THE HURRICANE WAS CALLING ME.

...

HEY, IT'S STILL CLOUDY.

PHEW !

YAWN

HYUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU

...

...

...

HYUUUUUU

HWOOOOOO

B-BUT... HOW?!

SHWOOM

METEOROLOGISTS HAVE NO EXPLANATION FOR THIS PHENOMENON. WE TAKE YOU NOW TO...

THIS IS NOW THE SECOND DAY THAT HURRICANE NO. 1 HAS REMAINED **STATIONARY** OVER KUROUZU-CHO.

HWOOOOOOOO

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

...I HEARD SOMEONE SAYING "KIRIE, KIRIE..." IT SOUNDED LIKE THEY WERE ON THE ROOF.

YOU KNOW, LAST NIGHT...

SHE INSISTED ON TAKING SHUICHI HIS DINNER.

WHERE'S KIRIE?

YOU *IDIOT!*

I BROUGHT YOUR DINNER.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING JUST WALKING AROUND?

SHUICHI ...?

KIRIE!

?!

...IS WATCHING *YOU!*

THAT GIANT SPIRAL EYE...

CAN'T YOU SEE THE EYE OF THE STORM? THE CENTER OF THOSE SWIRLING CLOUDS?

THAT'S RIDICULOUS...

WHAT?!

HUH ?!

THE VOICE OF THE STORM WAS CALLING YOUR NAME!

DIDN'T YOU HEAR THE WIND LAST NIGHT?

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING. ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT YOU'RE IN DANGER AS LONG AS YOU'RE OUT IN THE OPEN UNDER THAT STORM!

TH-THAT CAN'T BE...

I THINK I MAY HAVE A RIVAL.

SOUNDS LIKE IT'S TAKEN QUITE A FANCY TO YOU.

TRUP TRUP TRUP

COME ON!

SHOOOO

SHEEOOOOOOOOO

CR R R

AACK

SHWOOOOY

AIIEEE!

HURRY!

KASHOOM

CRUNCH!

THIS WAY!

CLACK

CLATTA

SHWAA

SHWAA

CLACKCLACKCLACK

AAAH!

RMB
RMB
RMB

SHKUNCHH

TWOOO

BOOM
OMM

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?! DO YOU NEED HELP?

KIRIE ?!

OH MY GOD!
I'M STUCK!

P-
PLEASE!

SHWAA

EEEE

SLURP

BECAUSE YOU LOOKED ALIKE!

IT MIS-TOOK HER FOR YOU!

B-BUT WHY?!

SUCKED UP BY THE EYE...

WHAT ?!

PFF

WHAM

LOOK OUT!

AIEEE!!

COME ON!

WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!

I CAN'T TAKE THIS...

IT REALIZED ITS MISTAKE.

SHWOOOO
AWOOOO
KIRIE
KIRIE
KRASHAM!
HRUMM

KIRIE

KIRIE

KLA

NG

SHWOOO

KIRIE

IT'S TOO MUCH...

BUT IT CAN'T SEE US UNDER THIS OVERPASS.

KIRIE

IT'S GOING CRAZY TRYING TO FIND YOU.

YOU CAN'T HELP HOW THE STORM FEELS.

IT'S NOT. YOU'RE JUST YOU.

I-IF THIS STORM IS MY FAULT...

BUT THAT WOMAN GOT KILLED INSTEAD OF ME!

...WHAT WILL IT DO TO THE TOWN?

IF THIS STORM STAYS...

DUNNO! SHALL WE ASK IT?

SO WHAT DO WE DO? IS THIS HURRICANE JUST GOING TO STAY HERE?

GET BACK!

IT'S TRYING TO PEEK INSIDE!

HEY!

KRAIG

KIRIE

KIRIE

WITH THE MIRROR!

IT FOUND US!

NO!!

HWOOOO

GET DOWN!

SHWOOO

HWOOOOOO

TONK

HURRY!

DOWN INTO THE STORM DRAIN!

THAT'S IT! *THE MANHOLE!*

SHOOOOOOOO

AGH!

HWOOO

SPLASH

FAS-
TER!

DOWN
!

HWOOOOOOOOC

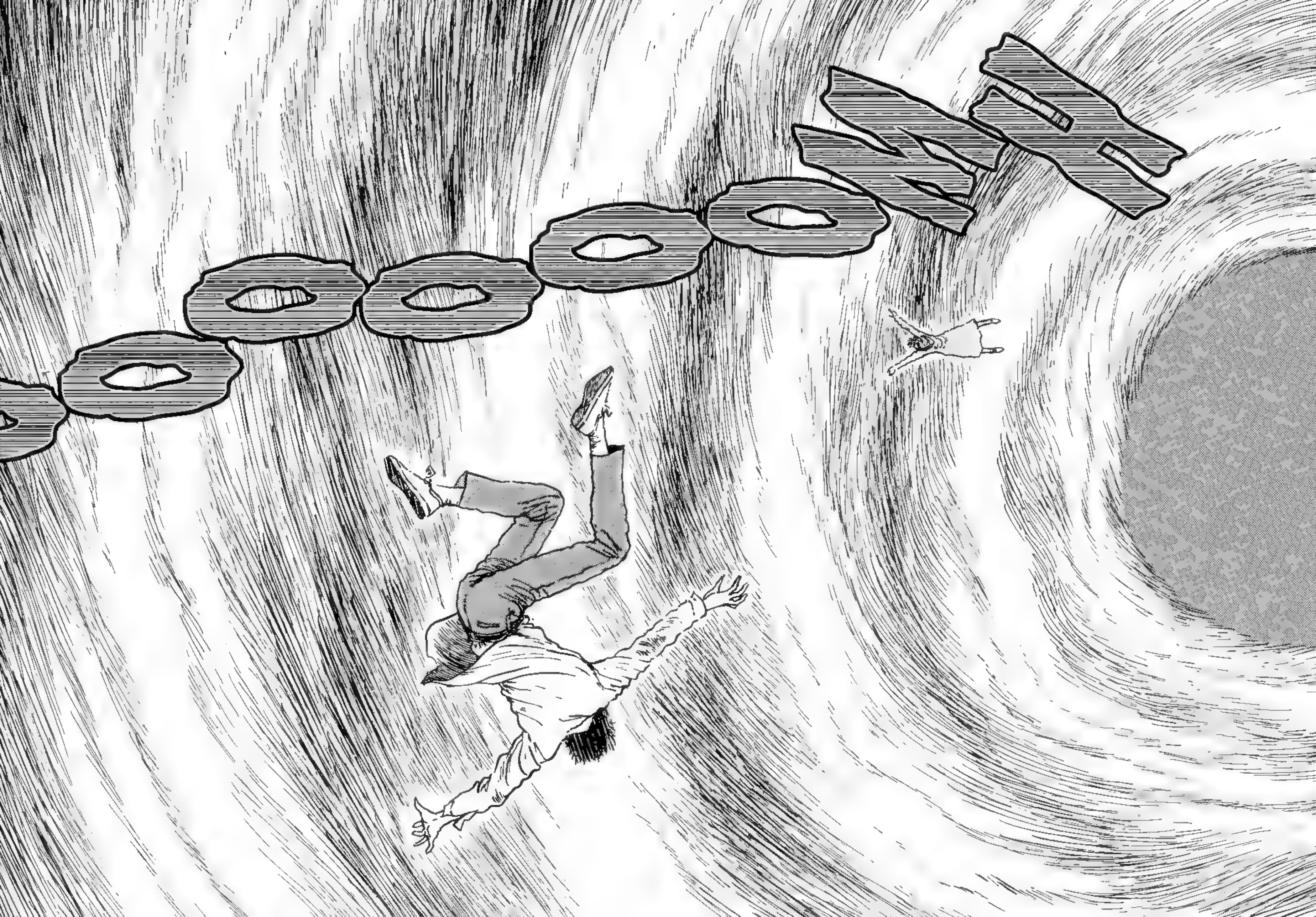
HWOOOO

SHHRRRRRRR

SHHRRRRRRR

HWOOOOOO

SEA OF



LIKE THE SMOKE FROM THE CREMATORIUM, THE HURRICANE WAS DRAWN INTO THE LAKE.

THE LAKE WATER STIRRED FOR HOURS, SPLASHING THE GRASS, HEAVING UP CLAY...

SOMETIME LATER THEY PULLED US OUT OF DRAGONFLY POND.

KIRIE, WAKE UP!!

SHUICHI !!

...HURRICANE NO. 1 HAS ABRUPTLY DISAPPEARED.

AFTER HOVERING FOR TWO DAYS OVER KUROUZU-CHO...

...IS NOW APPROACHING FROM THE SOUTH CHINA SEA...

HWOOOOOOO

THE NEXT SUMMER STORM...

SHAAA...

CHAPTER

13

THE HOUSE

ALL THE HOUSES AROUND DRAGONFLY POND WERE REDUCED TO RUBBLE, INCLUDING OURS.

THE CENTER OF TOWN SUFFERED THE WORST DAMAGE.

SEVERAL DAYS AGO KUROUZU-CHO WAS DEVASTATED BY A HURRICANE.

BY A MIRACLE, MY FAMILY SURVIVED...

...BUT WE HAD TO FIND ANOTHER PLACE TO LIVE.

THE HOUSES NEARBY WERE DESTROYED.

THE HURRICANE WAS SUCKED INTO THE POND, AS IF BY SOME MAGNETIC ATTRACTION.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT, WITH ALL THE PEOPLE MOVING OUT OF TOWN, WE HAVE PLENTY OF VACANCIES.

MM-HMM.

THAT'S GOOD, ISN'T IT?

BUT YOU'RE NOT ALONE. A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE IN THE SAME FIX.

IT'S TERRIBLE YOU LOST YOUR HOUSE IN THAT STORM.

WHAT...

...

HERE WE ARE.

WE CAN'T LIVE IN THIS DUMP!

BUT THIS IS ONE OF THE OLD ROW HOUSES!

THAT'S RIGHT.

TH-THIS IS THE VACANT HOUSE?!

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD ABOUT THIS HOUSE?!

THAT'S RIGHT, WE CAN'T!

NO, WE...

MOST HAVE BEEN ABANDONED FOR AGES, BUT A FEW ARE STILL INHABITED.

I MAY HAVE SAID THIS BEFORE, BUT...

...KUROUZU-CHO HAS ALWAYS HAD THESE RUINED ROW HOUSES.

...IT'S ON THIRD STREET, AND SAID TO BE HAUNTED BY A MONSTER WHO CAME OUT AT NIGHT.

AS FOR THIS PARTICULAR HOUSE...

NEVER MIND THAT NONSENSE! WE'RE *NOT* GOING TO LIVE IN THIS WRECK!

HA HA HA... THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS MONSTERS.

SEVERAL PET DOGS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAD BEEN FOUND SLAUGHTERED AND EATEN.

THERE ARE THREE APARTMENTS... TWO ARE ALREADY OCCUPIED.

I'M SORRY, BUT THIS IS WHAT THE TOWN HAS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE DISASTER VICTIMS.

WE'VE EVEN BUILT A TOILET. THERE'S ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME.

THE BUILDING HAS BEEN REPAIRED, AND ELECTRICITY INSTALLED.

HE MADE IT CLEAR WE HAD NO CHOICE.

IF YOU WANT TO FIND ANOTHER PLACE, I GUARANTEE IT WILL BE WORSE.

ALL THE OTHER HOUSES ARE FILLED BY DISASTER VICTIMS.

SKT SKT SKT SKT

SOUNDS LIKE MICE.

SO WHAT IF WE HAVE ELECTRICITY? THERE'S NO WATER.

ALL THEY DID FOR REPAIRS WAS COVER UP THE HOLES IN THE WALLS.

THIS IS AWFUL! WE CAN'T STAY HERE.

HUH? THAT LONG AGO?

WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME IF IT WAS HAUNTED.

NOT SURE... I HEARD IT WAS BEFORE THE 19TH CENTURY.

DAD, IF THIS PLACE DIDN'T HAVE ELECTRICITY OR PLUMBING, WHEN DO YOU THINK IT WAS BUILT?

STOP WHINING! BE GLAD WE HAVE A ROOF OVER OUR HEADS.

I DON'T WANT TO LIVE HERE. IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS!

KIRIE AND MITSUO, YOU COME TOO.

I'LL JOIN YOU LATER. I SHOULD INTRODUCE US TO OUR NEW NEIGHBORS.

NOW THEN, I'M GOING BACK TO THE HOUSE... I HAVE TO SIFT THROUGH THE RUBBLE.

TERRIBLE STORM, WASN'T IT?

OH, HELLO. MY NAME IS WAKABAYA-SHI.

GOOD AFTERNOON! WE'RE THE GOSHIMAS. WE JUST MOVED IN.

THEY'RE SQUAT-TERS. THEY MOVED IN WITHOUT PERMIS-SION LONG BEFORE THE STORM.

OH...YOU PROBABLY DON'T WANT TO BOTHER THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR.

...

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK

I THINK THE MONSTER LIVES NEXT DOOR!

MOM ...

QUIET! THEY'LL HEAR YOU!

BUT IT'S SCARY!

DON'T TALK SUCH NON-SENSE!

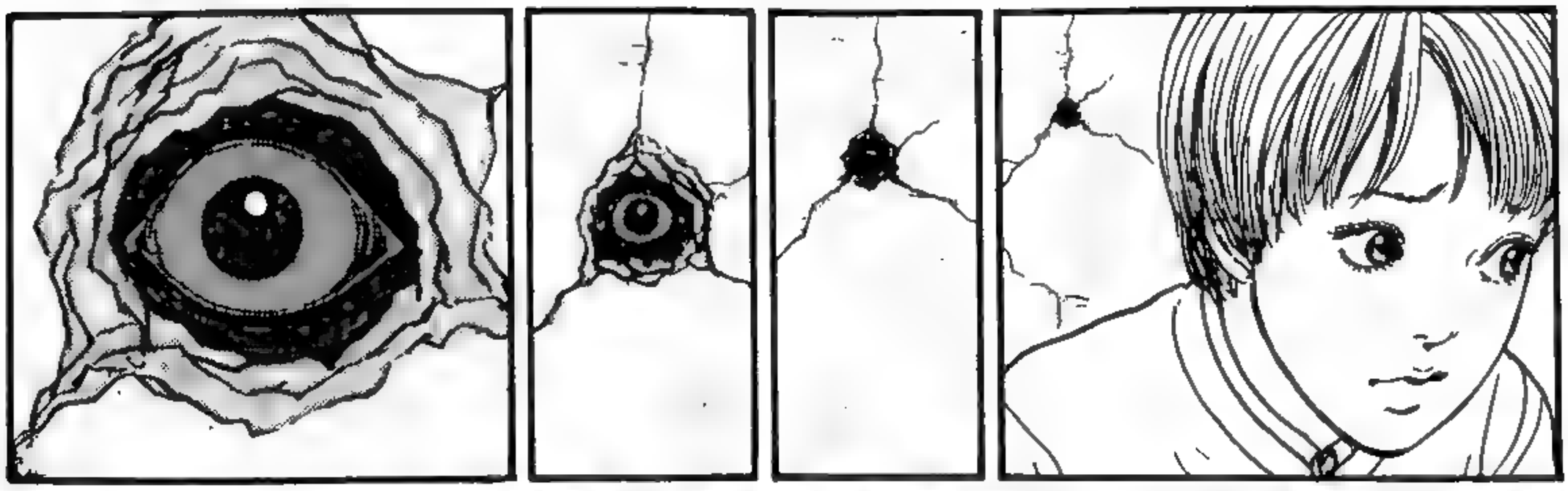
HERE...

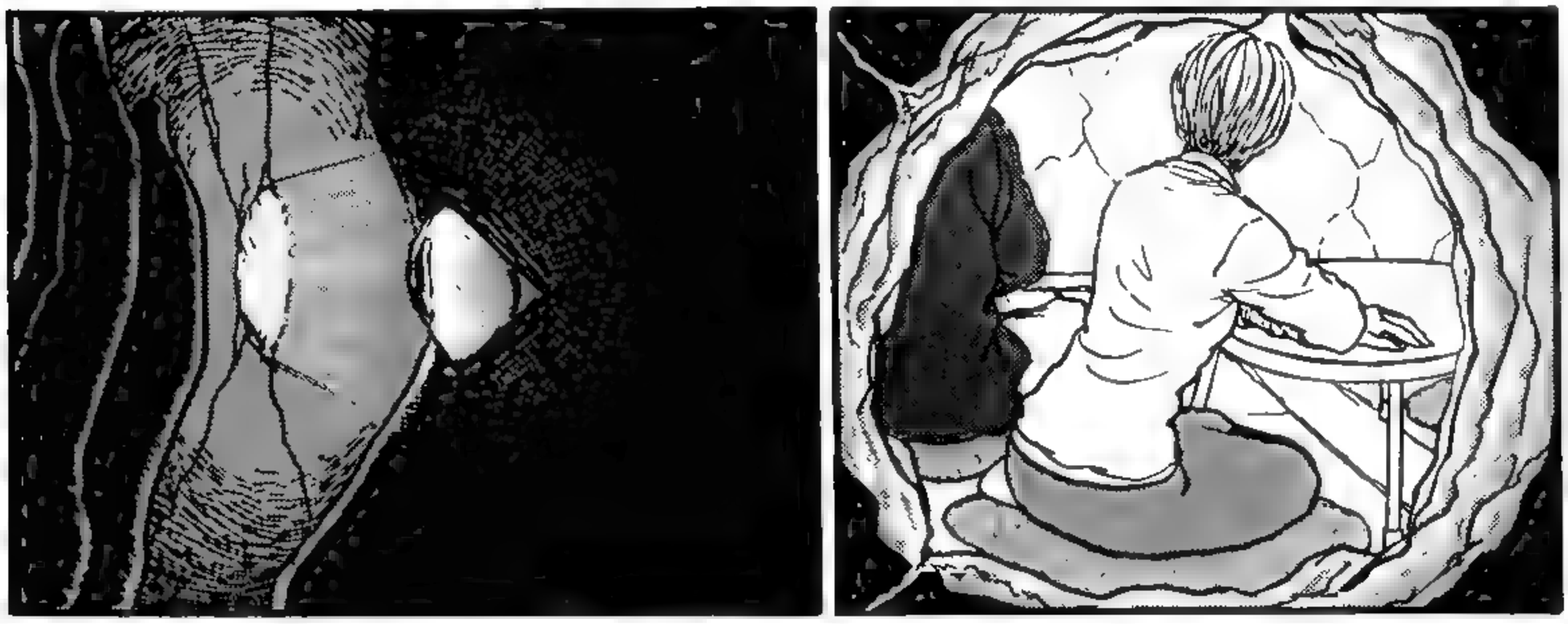
SURE.

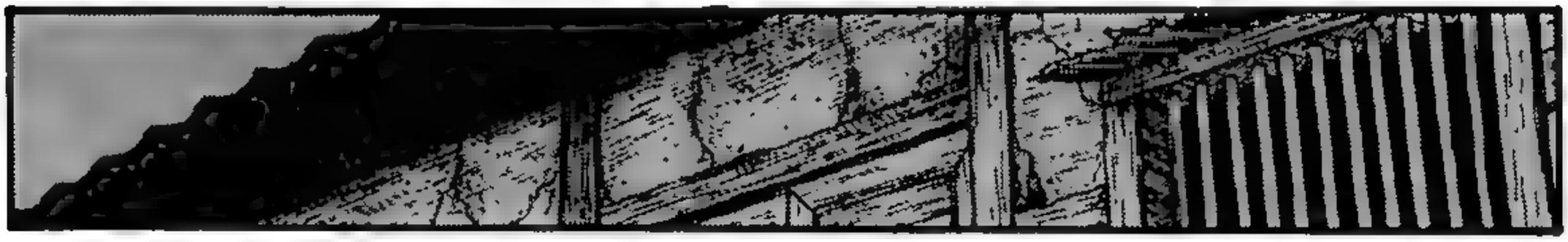
CAN I SEE?

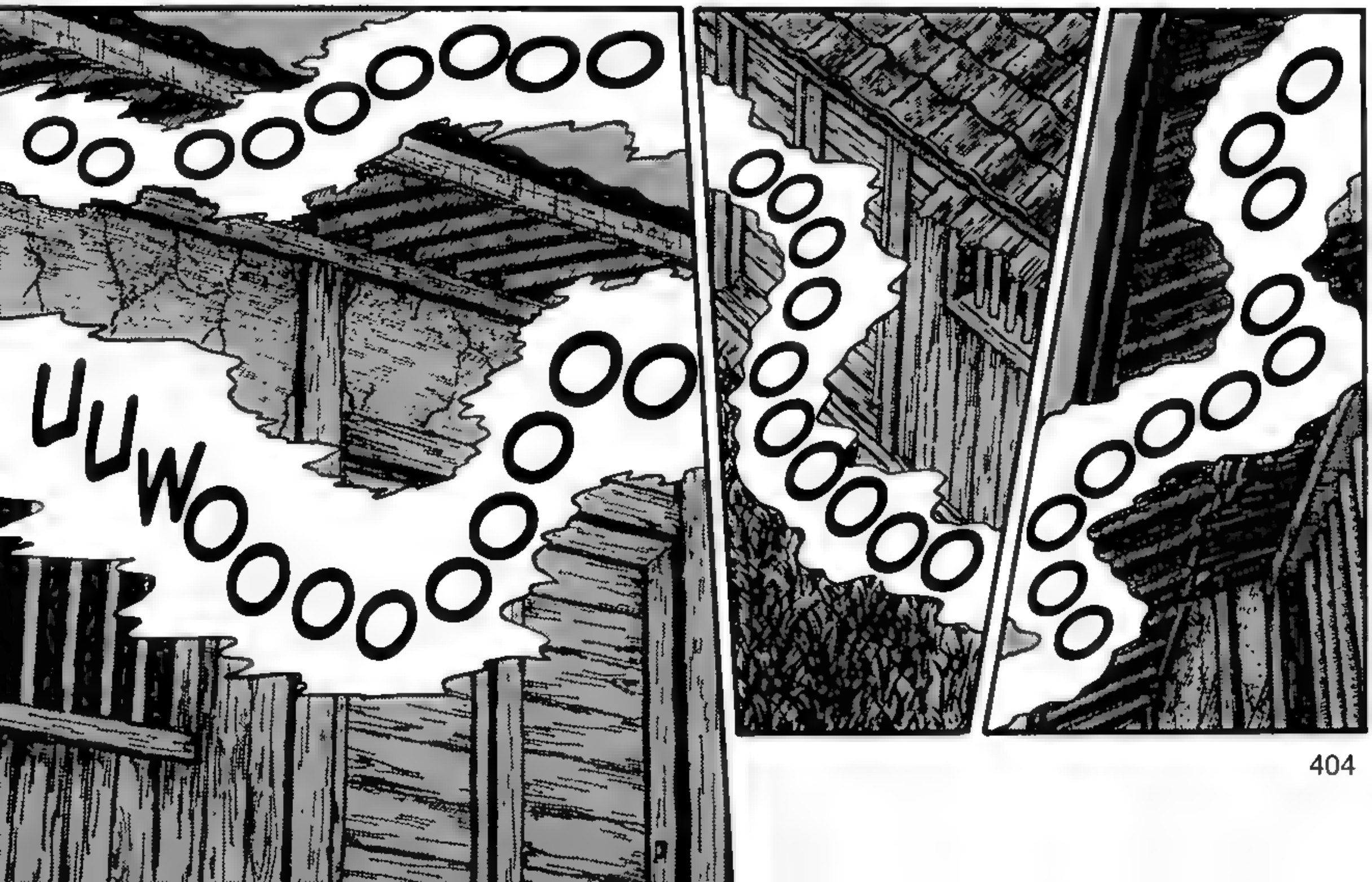
LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF WART.

OUCH... WHAT'S THIS?








UUWOOOOOO

OOHHH

UUWOOOOOOO

IT'S GOT TO BE!

OOOO

IT'S THE MONSTER!

IT SOUNDS LIKE AN ANIMAL HOWLING...

OOOOO

HM?

MOM... WHAT'S THAT SOUND ?

UUWOOOOO

LISTEN, IT'S COMING FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL!!

FROM THE ROOM WHERE THE SQUAT-TERS LIVE!

HOUSECLEANING?

HM?

THE NEXT MORN-ING...

SCRUB SCRUB

BY THE WAY, DID YOU...

...HEAR THE NOISE LAST NIGHT?

OH... MR. WAKA-BAYASHI.

OF COURSE NOT.

YES, BUT I'M NOT GETTING VERY FAR.

IT'S AN OLD WOMAN AND HER SON. THEY LIVE ON WELFARE.

A TOWN OFFICIAL TOLD ME WHO LIVES THERE.

IT SOUNDED LIKE IT WAS COMING FROM THE PEOPLE ON THAT SIDE OF THE HOUSE.

BUT NO ONE KNOWS WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM. THE OLD WOMAN WON'T LET ANYONE SEE HIM.

APPARENTLY, THE SON HAS A SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITION. THAT WAS HIM, CRYING FROM THE PAIN.

...THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE RUMORS ABOUT A MONSTER.

IF HE LOOKS BAD ENOUGH...

CREAK

THEY SAY HE'S DEFORMED DUE TO HIS ILLNESS.

...THERE SHE IS NOW.

SPEAK-ING OF WHICH...

TREMBLE

...ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

EXCUSE ME...

OH!

SLMP

TREMBLE

CAN YOU STAND UP?

OH!

FIP

UM... OH...

IT WAS NOTHING.

KIRIE?

WHAT'S WRONG?

AWAAAH

AWAAAH

THAT AFTER-NOON...

AND IT SOUNDS BAD!

NO! THAT'S A DIFFERENT NOISE! IT'S THE OLD WOMAN CRYING!

IT'S HOWL-ING AGAIN!!

AWAAAH

KIRIE!

SHE MIGHT BE IN TROU-BLE!

EX-CUSE ME!

AWAAAH

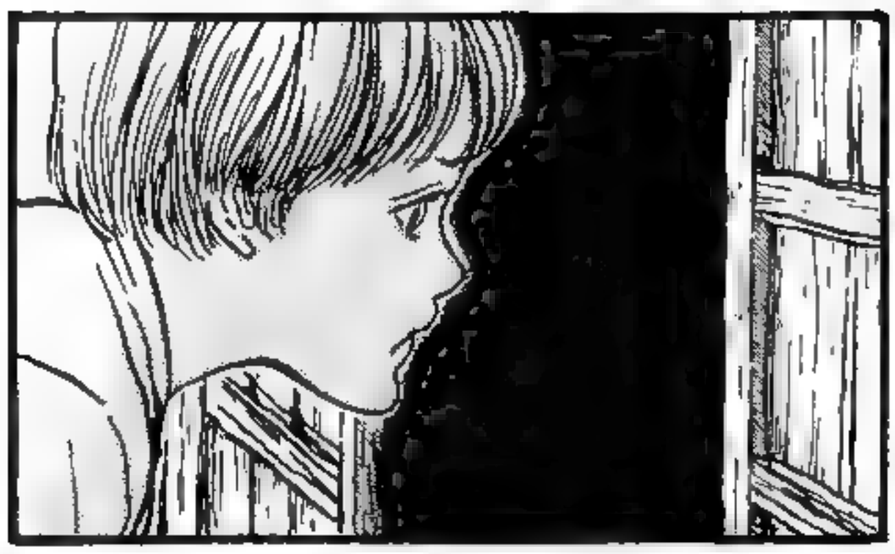
AWAAH

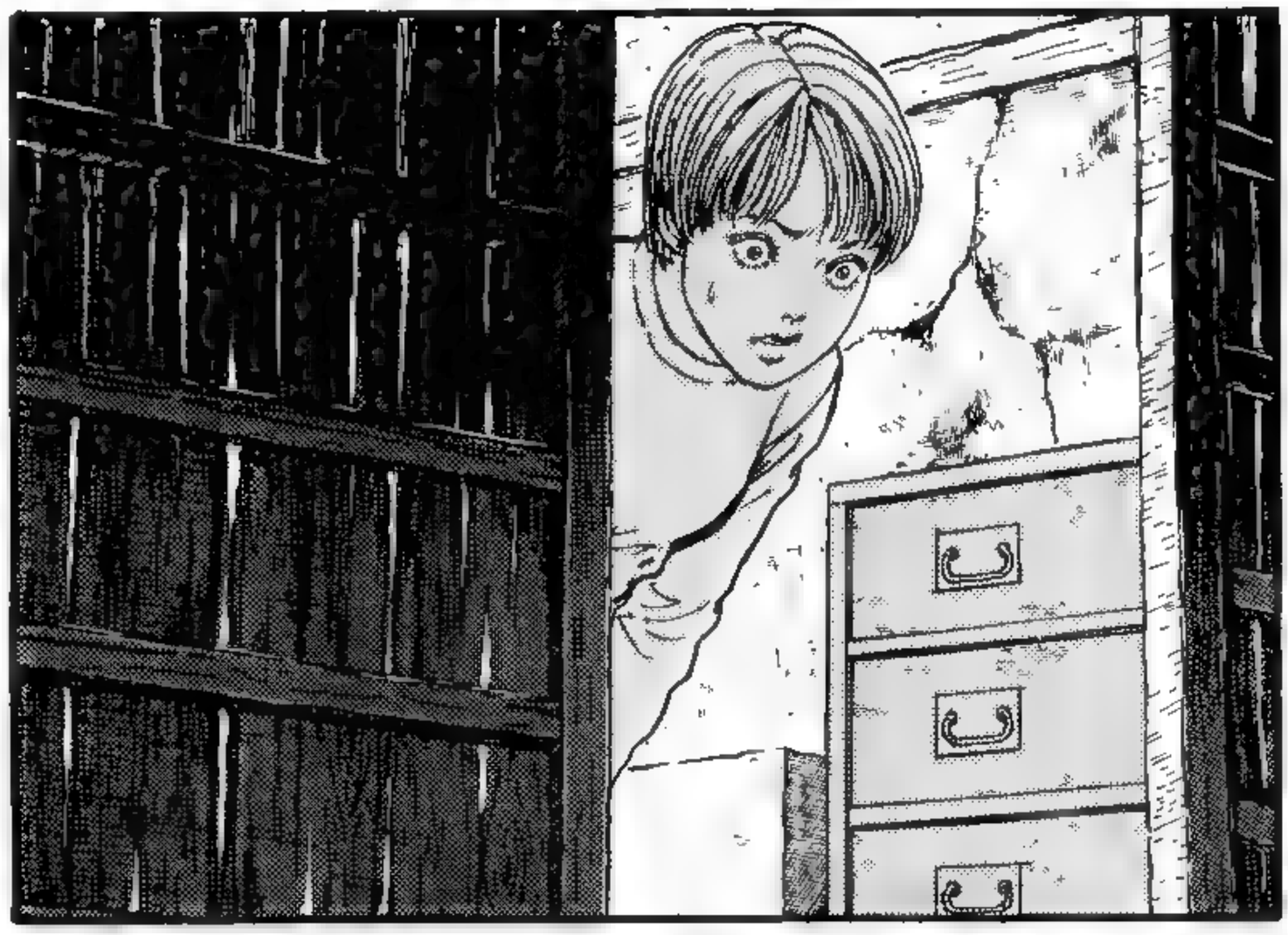
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT ?!

AWAAAH

MY SON... MY SON...

MY SON HAS DIED...

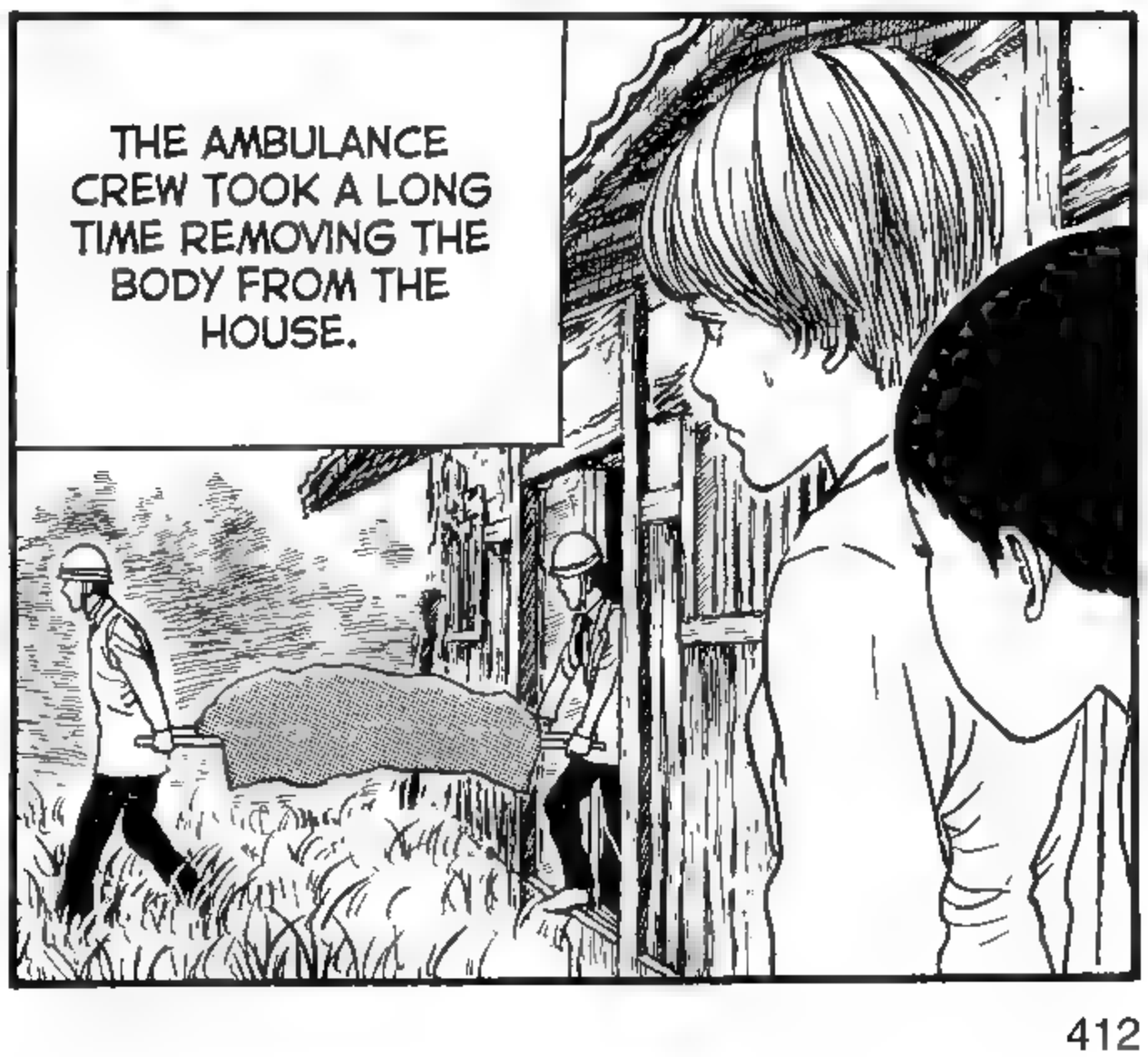




THE SON HAD SUFFERED FROM THE SAME THING.

DOCTORS DIAGNOSED THE OLD WOMAN WITH AN UNKNOWN SKIN DISEASE, AND KEPT HER FOR OBSERVATION.

THE AMBULANCE CREW TOOK A LONG TIME REMOVING THE BODY FROM THE HOUSE.



I WISH I'D BEEN THERE.

HYOOOO

WHAT A SHAME!

...I WENT INTO THEIR ROOMS THE OTHER NIGHT.

YOU SEE ...

NOW WHAT WAS *THAT* ABOUT?

THE FLOOR WHERE HER SON SLEPT WAS COVERED WITH SMALL HOLES.

PLEASE TELL ME. I'M REALLY INTERESTED.

SO HOW DID THE SON LOOK?

C'MON, I PROMISE NOT TO TELL ANYONE.

BUT HE WASN'T NORMAL, WAS HE?

I HAVE NO IDEA.

...I SEE. PRETTY HEAD-STRONG, AREN'T YOU?

HMM...

I'M SORRY, I'D RATHER NOT.

WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS THAT, AS WITH HURRICANE NO. 1, THE "EYE" OF THE STORM IS VISIBLE FROM THE GROUND.

HYOOOO

IT'S EXPECTED TO CONTINUE UP THROUGH JAPAN.

HURRI-CANE NO. 2 HAS REACHED KYÛSHÛ.

THEY HURT!

ME TOO, ON MY HANDS!

YOU HAVE THEM? SO DO I.

LOTS OF THEM...

THERE ARE WARTS ON MY FEET...

THE WARTS HAVE SPREAD!

I'VE GOT THEM ALL OVER MY BODY.

OOW... MY FEET!

HYOOOOOO

SQUEAK

I'M HOME!

OH NO...

BUT I CAN ONLY SEE SO MUCH THROUGH THIS HOLE. I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A NEW ONE SOON.

KIRIE, YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL AND WILLFUL...I CAN'T KEEP MY EYES OFF YOU.

YOU DON'T KNOW I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU EVER SINCE YOU MOVED IN HERE.

HEH HEH...

DAMN, WHAT'S WITH MY HAND?

MAYBE NEAR HER BED...

?!

HYOOOO

IT HURTS !

WEEOOO

THE STORM'S REALLY RAGING.

AARGH ...

WEEOOO

HYOOOOO

CRASH!

THEY'RE ...

...THE SAME THINGS I SAW ON THAT OLD WOMAN AND HER SON!!

THESE AREN'T WARTS!

HYOOO

CRRRACK

OOOO

ARE WE GOING TO DIE LIKE THE SON?

WHAT DO WE DO?

...WE HAVE THEIR DIS-EASE?

SO WE...

THEIR ILLNESS MUST HAVE SPREAD TO *US!!*

MAYBE OUR NEIGH-BOR CAN DO SOME-THING.

WHAT... WHAT CAN WE DO?

WE CAN'T GO FOR HELP IN THIS STORM ...

MR. WAKA-BAYASHI!!

HOOO

CAN YOU HEAR US, MR. WAKA-BAYASHI?

MR. WAKA-BAYASHI!

...WITH NO RELIEF FROM HURRICANE NO. 2.

SEVERAL DAYS WENT BY...

HYOOOOO

PLEASE LIE STILL, DEAR.

EEEOOOO

AAAH... OWWW...

IT HURTS!

WE MUST DO SOMETHING, KIRIE!

WE HAVE TO GO, EVEN IF IT'S NOT SAFE OUTSIDE!

THE GERMS OR VIRUS MIGHT BE ALL OVER THIS PLACE.

WHAT?

...I THINK IT'S BECAUSE OF THIS HOUSE.

MOM...

THE WIND'S TOO STRONG!

YOU WON'T MAKE IT!

I...I'M GOING FOR HELP!

WHAT'S *THAT?!*

LOOK!

S-STOP... KIRIE!!

THOSE WEREN'T THERE UNTIL TODAY!!

WHAT ARE THEY... HORNS?

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

BRK BRK

BRK

CRRICK

SK ASS H!

AAAH!

CP UP MB LE

IS... IS THAT ...

MR. WAKABA-YASHI?!

SQUEAK!

OOOOH!!

SQUEAL!

GRAB

NO!!

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

GULP

CRUNCH

UC

KUH...
KUH...

THAK

AAAH!

KI... KIRIE ...

KUH... KIRIE...

WOOO SHUF

KIRIE... GET OUT!

GET OUT! RUN!

WOOOO

AIYEE!

FW OOH

EEYAA!

SHLUP

SKU

WE CRAWLED OUR WAY OUT OF THE ROW HOUSE, AND THE WARTS... OR WHATEVER THEY WERE... WENT AWAY.

SOON AFTER, HURRICANE NO. 2 AND ITS ROAR WERE SUCKED INTO DRAGONFLY POND.

UKK...

THUD

CHAPTER

14

BUTTERFLIES

POPULATION 6,000, TUCKED BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE MOUNTAINS.

IT'S A LITTLE TOWN WEST OF MIDORIYAMA-SHI, MS. MARUYAMA.

SO WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS KUROUZU-CHO, ANYWAY?

VRRRUM

IT'S ANYONE'S GUESS WHAT'S GOING ON.

...BUT WITH THE ONSLAUGHT OF HURRICANES 3 THROUGH 6, WE'VE LOST ALL CONTACT WITH THE INSIDE.

AFTER HURRICANE NO. 1 AND NO. 2 THERE WERE REPORTS ON THE DAMAGE...

VRRRUM

I WISH THERE WERE MORE I COULD TELL YOU.

...AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL.

THERE IT IS...

THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS THEY SENT US TO FIND OUT.

WE CAN'T BE THE FIRST REPORTERS TO GO IN. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS?

VRRRUM

VRRRUUUUMM

VRRRUM

?

VRRRUM

IT'S A TWISTER !!

SPEED UP!

BE-HIND US!

AAA HH!

HM? WHAT?

WOOOO

VRRUM

WOOOOO

WHAM

URRGH ...

MR. SAKA-GAMI!

MR. ENDO!

URR...

BEEP BEEP

MY CELL... WHERE'S MY CELL ...?

OH GOD, I HAVE TO CALL FOR HELP...

I HAVE TO GET HELP...

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

THAT'S WEIRD. NO SIGNAL.

...

THE AIR FEELS HEAVY...

HUFF

IT'S STRANGE ...

IT'S NOT THAT COLD, BUT I CAN SEE MY BREATH...

HUFF

OR IS IT JUST ME?

HUFF

HUFF

MORE OVER-TURNED CARS!

I SHOULD BE NEAR THE TOWN...

BUT WHY IS IT SO QUIET?

WHAT?!

WUP WUP WUP WUP WUP WUP

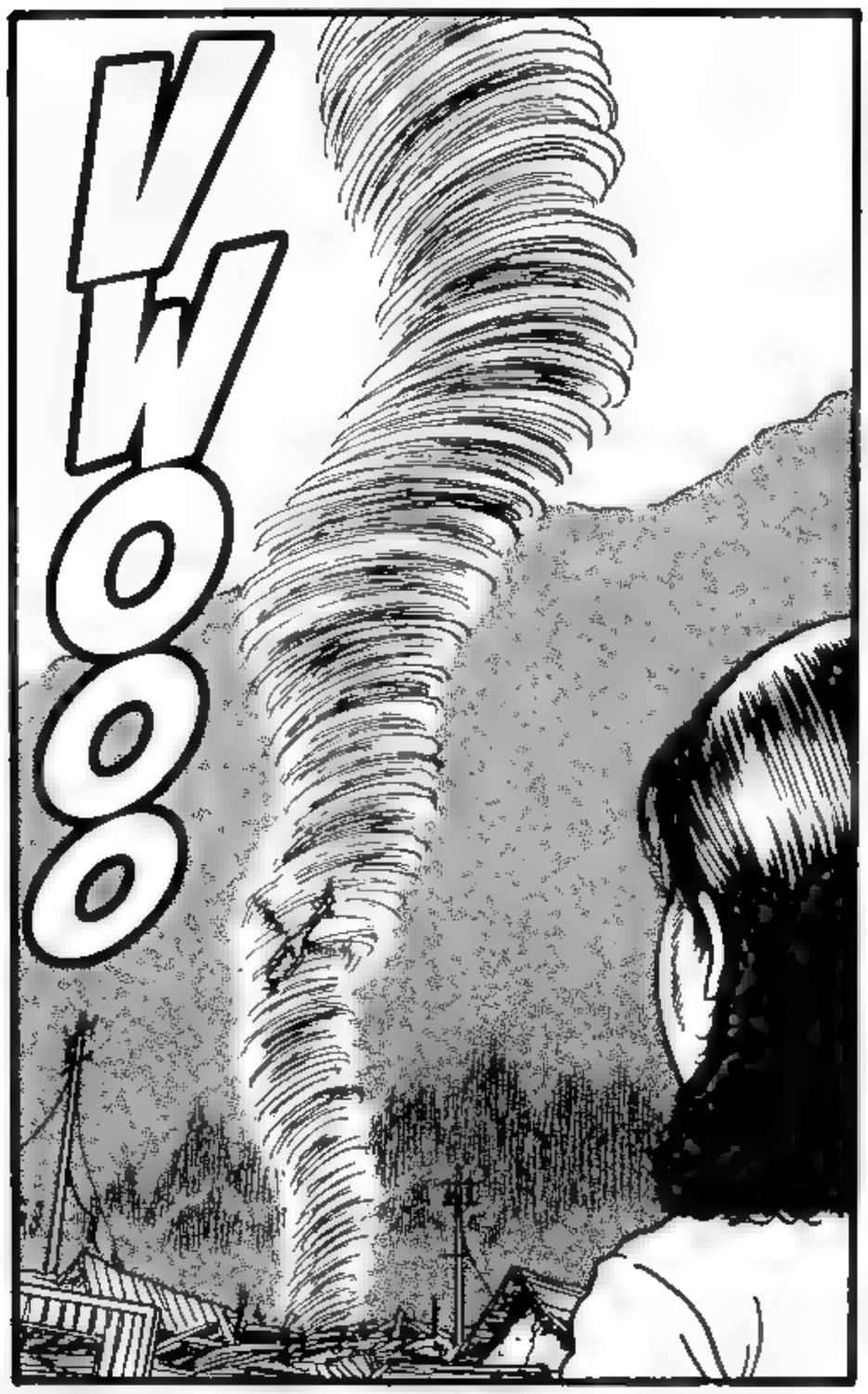
OH!

WUP WUP WUP WUP WUP WUP

A TV HELI-COPTER.

THERE'S NOTHING BUT RUBBLE.

DID THE HURRI-CANES DO THIS?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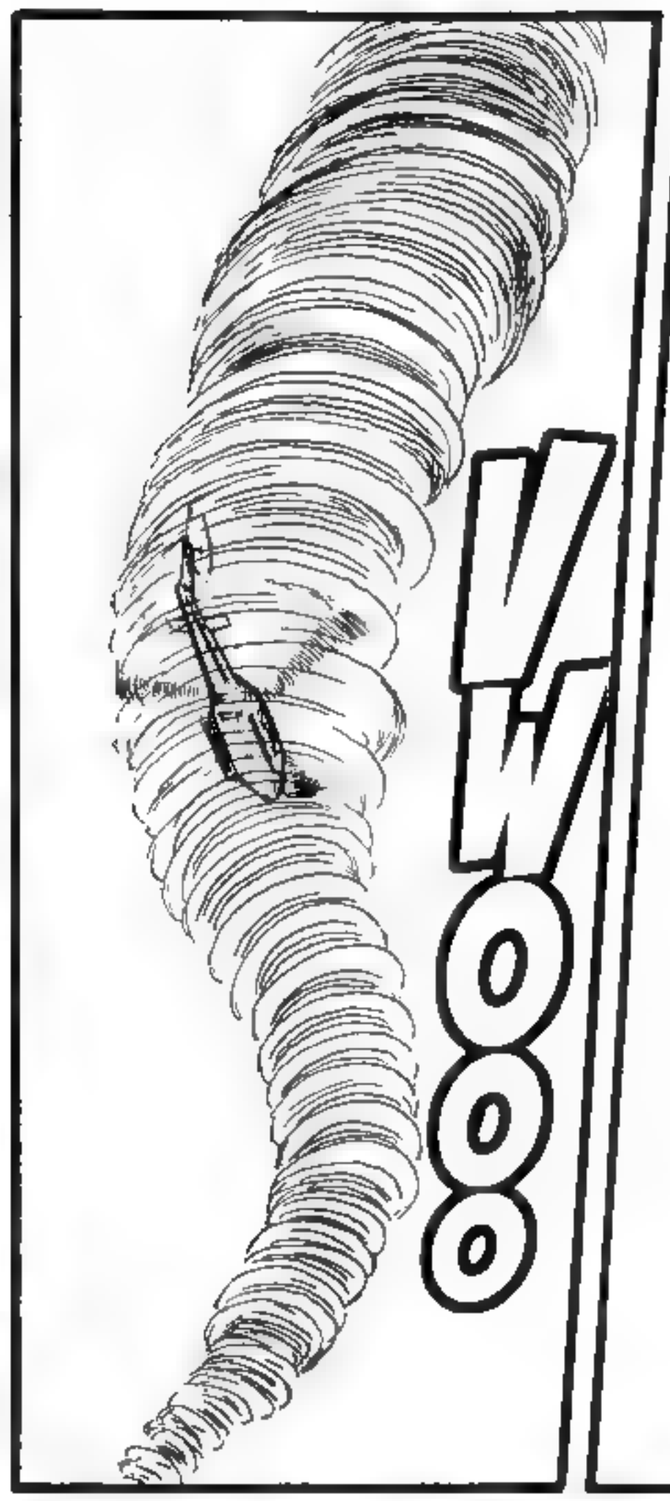
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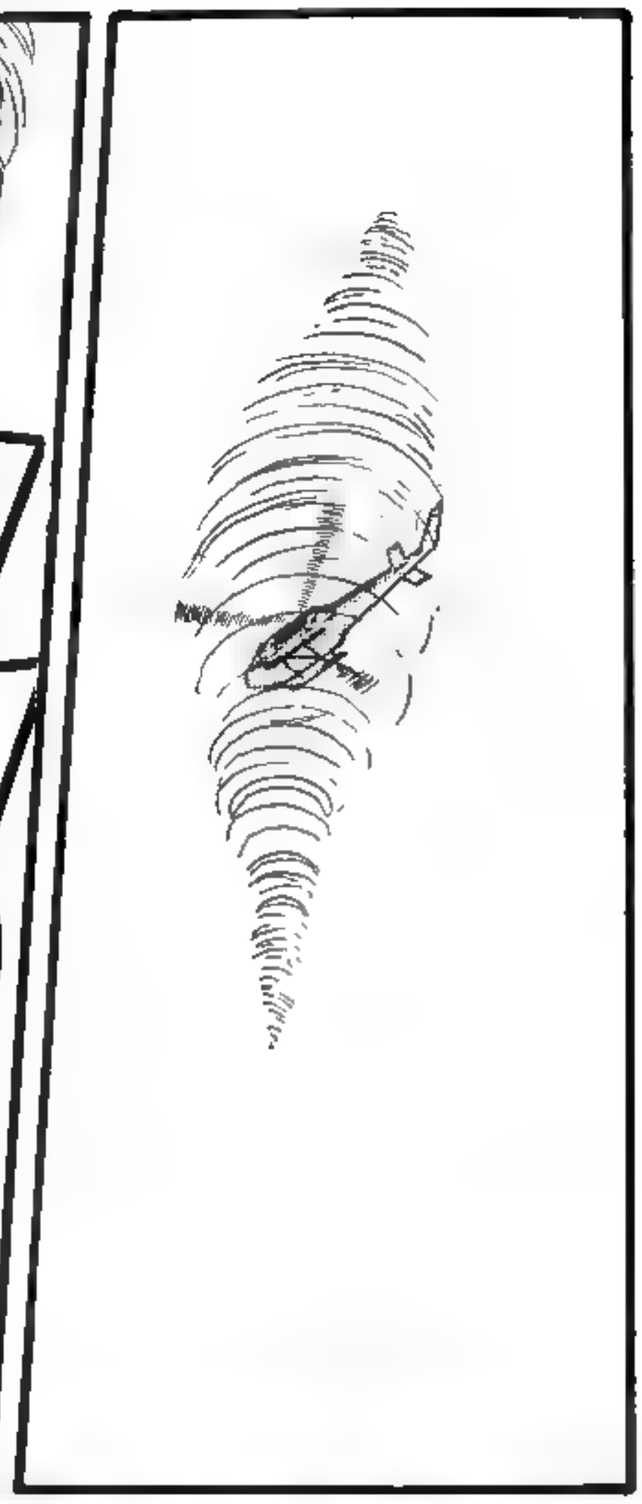
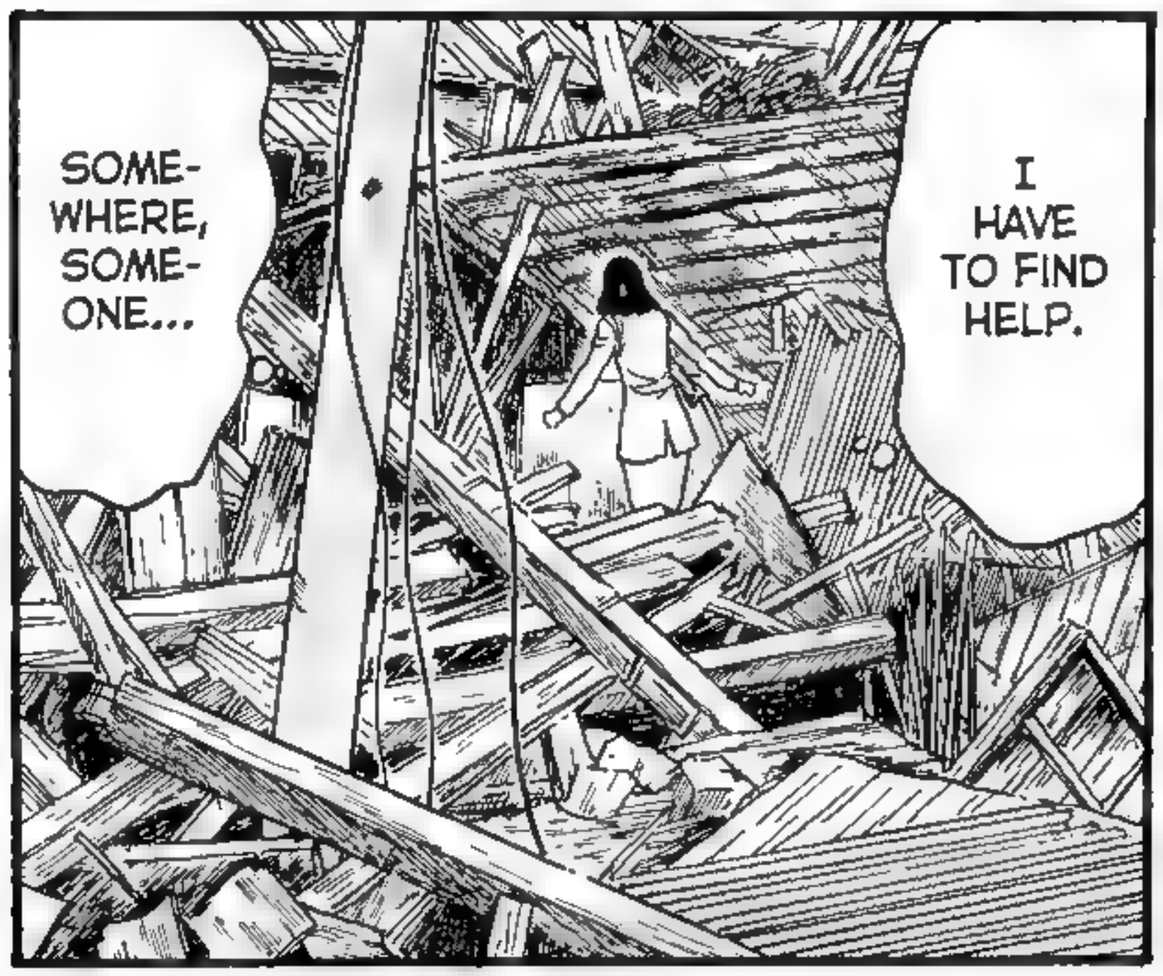


AND WATER SPLASHED UP...
IT CRASHED !

SPWASHHH


SOME-WHERE, SOME-ONE...
I HAVE TO FIND HELP.

IT MUST'VE FALLEN INTO A LAKE.
AWFUL, AWFUL...

BZZZ

AAHH!

IS ANYONE LEFT ALIVE?

THIS IS HORRIBLE. THE RUINS ARE FULL OF CORPSES...

RMBRMBRMBRMBRMB

STP

IT'S COMING FROM WHERE THE COPTER ...

WHAT'S THAT?

RMBRMBRMBR

RMB RMB RMB RMB RMB

RMB RMB RMB RMB RMB

I'LL SET YOU FREE.

WHY ARE YOU KIDS TIED UP?

TRUP TRUP

OH MY GOD!

WHO DID THIS TO YOU?

HOW LONG WERE YOU TIED UP?

...

ARE YOU OKAY?

AREN'T THERE ANY ADULTS AROUND?

HEY!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WAIT!

WAIT A MINUTE!

FLOOOOOOO

Heh heh heh

HIIIIIIII

RRRRRRRR

CRUNCH

WHRRRRRRRRR

HA HA
HA HA!

KA-RUNCH

HYA
HA HA!

SA

KA

CRASH

WHAT IN THE WORLD ...?

WOOOO

WHIP

THIS'LL DO IT.

YEAH!

LET'S GET RID OF HER.

AH, SHE SUCKS.

HEY, IT'S THAT WOMAN FROM BEFORE.

WOOOOOOOOOO

HUH?!

YEAH, YEAH...

...GO SLOWLY, OR WE'LL MAKE A TWISTER BEHIND US AND...

WOOOOOO

FOLLOW HER. DON'T FORGET...

SHE'S GETTING AWAY.

FWOOO

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM?

I THOUGHT SHE'D BE TOO HURT FROM THE LAST ONE.

SHE DUCKED IT AGAIN.

NOW TO FINISH HER OFF!

GET AWAY FROM ME!

WH-WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?!

NO!!

WHRRK

EYAA!

...

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

TOYO TV? I KNEW I'D SEEN YOU BEFORE.

I-I'M CHIE MARUYAMA, A REPORTER FOR TOYO TELEVI-SION...

MITSUO, SLOW DOWN!

YOU LOOK HURT...CAN YOU WALK?

SSHH... YOU'RE MORE WINDED THAN YOU THINK...

WHAT... WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

RUINS... WHIRL-WINDS... DEATH... SCAVENG-ING...

THIS IS MY BROTHER MITSUO. RIGHT NOW WE'RE LOOKING FOR FOOD.

I'M KIRIE GOSHI-MA.

IT'S NOW A WHIRLPOOL THAT NEVER STOPS.

...ALL SIX OF THOSE HURRI-CANES, SWALLOWING THEM WHOLE.

THEY SAY IT'S BECAUSE OF THE FORCE OF THE AIR PRESSURE FROM DRAGONFLY POND. I KNOW IT SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT THAT LAKE SUCKED IN...

THE MEREST SUDDEN MOTION OR LOUD NOISE HERE CREATES AN IMMENSE WHIRLWIND.

YES... ANY-ONE CAN.

WAIT... YOU MEAN I CAN MAKE A WHIRLWIND, TOO?!

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG THIS WILL GO ON.

WE HAVE TO MOVE SLOWLY SO WE DON'T CREATE ANY MORE TWISTERS.

...FOR BLOW-ING THOSE KIDS AWAY?

THEN... THEN I WAS RE-SPONSI-BLE...

EVEN YOUR BREATH CAN CREATE ONE.

SO PLEASE KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN.

THOSE KIDS... AND MY CREW... AND THAT HELICOPTER...

WHAT'S WRONG ?

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

HOW COULD I HAVE DONE SUCH AN AWFUL THING? THOSE KIDS ARE PROBABLY...

IT'S TOO DANGER-OUS TO BE OUT-SIDE.

PLEASE DON'T CRY. WE'LL TAKE YOU TO OUR PLACE.

THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THIS TOWN.

"THE FLAPPING OF A SINGLE BUTTERFLY'S WINGS CAN CREATE A HURRICANE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD."

THIS IS LIKE THE *"BUTTERFLY EFFECT"*...

HM?

WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

YES. THERE'S LOTS OF THEM AROUND HERE.

IT'S AN OLD RUN-DOWN SHACK.

COME ON IN.

THIS IS WHERE WE LIVE.

WE'RE HOME.

THE OTHER ROW HOUSES ARE FINE, TOO. IT'S STRANGE, BECAUSE THEY WERE IN LOUSY SHAPE TO BEGIN WITH.

CREAK

FOR WHATEVER REASON, THIS BUILDING HASN'T SUFFERED ANY DAMAGE.

YOU'LL BE SAFE HERE. UNLIKE OUR OLD PLACE, IT'S NOT INFECTED.

INFECTED...?

GO ON.

KIRIE... DID YOU BRING OVER A GUEST?

MY CREW WAS INJURED IN A CAR ACCIDENT ON THE ROAD INTO TOWN.

E-EXCUSE ME, I'M CHIE MARUYAMA OF TOYO TELEVISION.

IT'S PRETTY CROWDED. LOTS OF PEOPLE LOST THEIR HOMES.

...

CAN ANYONE COME WITH ME TO HELP THEM? PLEASE! ANYONE, *PLEASE!*

THAT'S RIGHT. FORGET IT.

IT'S USE-LESS.

SO WILL I.

THAT'S AWFUL... I'LL GO WITH YOU.

EVEN IF YOU CAME FROM OUTSIDE YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO LEAVE.

NO ONE CAN GET OUT ...?

...

ALL THE REPORTERS, RESCUE TEAMS, AND VOLUNTEERS WHO'VE COME HERE AFTER THE LAST HURRICANE...

...ARE STUCK HERE, LIKE US. LIKE YOU.

EVEN THE SIGNAL FROM A CELL PHONE CAN'T GET OUT OF KUROUZU-CHO ANYMORE.

THERE'S A TERRIFYING POWER IN THIS TOWN. IT'S SUCKING US INTO ITS SPIRAL.

OH!

DON'T LISTEN TO THEM... LET'S GO.

YOU'RE...

HE'S DEAD.

SO YOU'RE OKAY. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER BOY?

YOU *KILLED* HIM!

FWOO!!

I DIDN'T KNOW, I JUST...

I-I'M SO SORRY ...

WOOOOOO

SLAM

INSIDE! HURRY!

GET BACK INTO THE HOUSE!!

WOOOOO

HAH...

SINCE THEY WERE ORPHANED BY THE HURRICANE...

WE CAN'T LIFT A FINGER AGAINST THEM!

THEY OBVIOUSLY GOT FREE SOMEHOW!

DAMN BRATS! I THOUGHT WE TIED THEM UP!

KIDS LIKE THEM HAVE DESTROYED HALF THIS TOWN!

...THEY'VE BEEN ROAMING THE STREETS, BLOWING DOWN EVERY HOUSE THEY SEE.

WOOOO

YEAH...

THIS DUMP WON'T TAKE A SECOND.

FWOO!

HWOOOOOOOO

AAH!

HWOO OOOOO

WE'LL SHOW 'EM!

SPRUSS

GOD DAMN HOUSE!

...BUT WON'T BLOW APART.

THAT'S WEIRD... IT'S ALL RUINED...

HERE WE GO!!

NEOOOO

TWOOOO

WE HAVE TO FIGHT BACK!

DAMN IT, WE CAN'T LET THEM DO THIS!

WOOOOOO

THAT DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.

I DON'T GET IT.

FWOOO!!

READY, SET-!

ALL RIGHT THEN, BREATHE DEEP!

WHEEOOOOO

WOOO

HA HA HA HA

THEY DE-SERVED IT!!

HA HA HA! WE SENT EM FLYING!

MAD...

MAD...

MAD...

IT'S TRYING TO TURN INTO A SPIRAL...

THIS TOWN WILL BE DESTROYED.

A MAD SPIRAL ...

THIS TOWN'S GOING MAD...

THAT'S IT...IT'S GOING TO BECOME A SPIRAL...

SHU-ICHI...

HYA HA HA HA!

AARRGH! NO WAY!

HOW DID THEY LEARN TO DO THAT?!

LOOK AT THEM!

THEY'RE WHEELING AROUND LIKE BUTTER-FLIES!

KUROUZU-CHO... WAS GOING MAD.

SOARING
CHAPTER
15

WHOOOO

WHOOOO

WHOOOO

WHOOOO

WHOOOO

OOOOOOOOO
NOOOOOOO

YEAHHH!

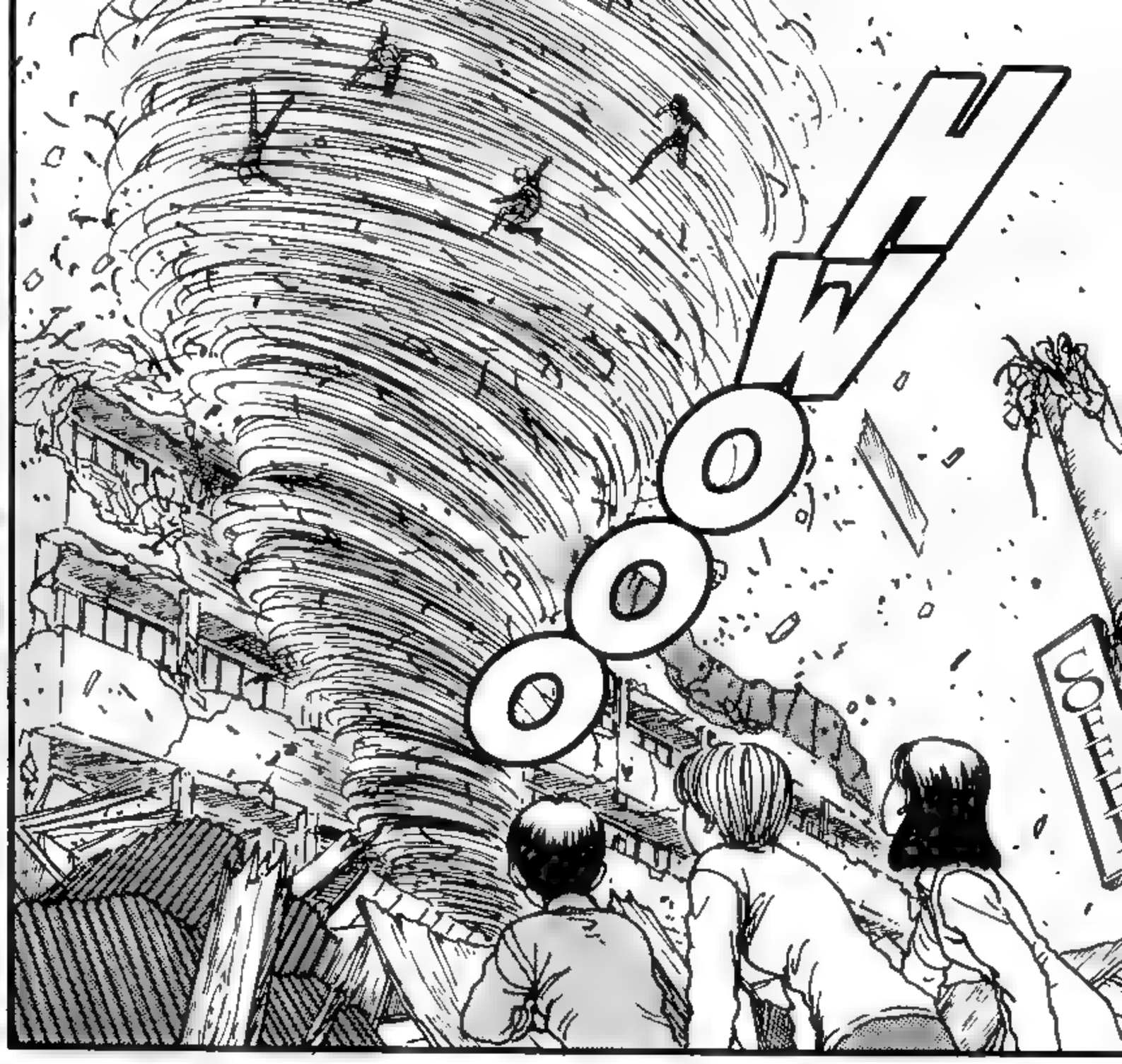
KUROUZU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, DEAD AHEAD!

PREPARE TO ATTACK !!

ROGER WILCO!

CHARGE!

WRRAAA



THEY'RE WRECKING ALL THE CONCRETE BUILDINGS.

A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE JOINED THEM.

THOSE GANGS ARE OUT OF CONTROL.

YOU HAVE TO BE REALLY RECKLESS TO RIDE A TWISTER.

LOTS OF PEOPLE HAVE DIED TRYING IT.

IT'S DANGEROUS!

DON'T YOU DARE, MITSUO!

MAYBE I'LL JOIN TOO...

IT LOOKS FUN.

AW MAN... I'M HUNGRY!

HWOOOO

HOW DO *THEY* GET THE ENERGY TO DO THAT?

IT'S GETTING HARDER TO FIND FOOD.

AT LEAST WE'D HAVE SOME-THING TO EAT!

I WISH I *WAS* IN THEIR GANG!

APPARENTLY THEY STEAL FOOD SHIPMENTS FROM RELIEF AGENCIES AND RESCUE TEAMS.

FORGET IT, MITSUO.

THEY'RE STILL COMING, YOU KNOW. NO ONE OUTSIDE REALIZES YOU CAN'T GET OUT...

KEEP QUIET OR YOU'LL MA-

SHUT UP, MITSUO!

...THEY'RE DOING WHATEVER THEY WANT!

BUT WE'RE *STARVING!* WHILE WE SNEAK AROUND LIKE SNAILS, TRYING NOT TO MAKE WHIRLWINDS...

EEEEE!

CHIE...?!

WOOOOO

LOOK OVER THERE!

I-I'M SORRY. BUT...

CHIE, I KNOW YOU'RE STILL NEW HERE...

...BUT PLEASE BE QUIET... *PLEASE*...

THEY'RE SNAIL PEOPLE.

I SWEAR I SAW THEM MOVE...

WHAT ARE THEY?

OH MY...

THAT'S ...

SH LR R

OH... MY GOD!

SHRRR

SHLOOO

I WONDER WHAT BROUGHT THEM OUT?

BUT... IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE SEEN ANY.

THE THINGS GOING ON IN THIS TOWN TURN SOME PEOPLE INTO SNAILS.

THEY USED TO BE HUMAN.

WHAT?

SHFFF

I'M NOT PUSH-ING!

STOP PUSH-ING!

CLOSE THE DOOR, THERE'S A DRAFT...

BUT WE WERE LIVING HERE BEFORE YOU PEOPLE CAME!

GET OUT OF HERE! THERE'S NO ROOM!

GOD, IT'S GETTING CROWDED...

MOM!

KIRIE... KIRIE! COME OVER HERE!

WHAT'S THIS...?

IT MUST BE THE SAME IN THE OTHER ROW HOUSES.

AND WE CAN MOVE AND TALK NORMALLY WITHOUT BRINGING THE PLACE DOWN ON OUR HEADS.

THESE SHACKS ARE THE ONLY THINGS THE WHIRL-WINDS CAN'T DESTROY.

IF THIS GOES ON WE'LL BE PACKED LIKE SARDINES.

BUT HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN IT HOLD?

LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN THE WALL!

IT WAS SEALED IN THE PLAS-TER!

GRIP

CRACK

OOPS!

YEAH ...

LOOKS LIKE A SCROLL!

IT LOOKS OLD. UNTIE IT.

YOU CAN'T TOUCH ME! SHUT UP!

YOU SON OF A BITCH! I'LL KILL YOU!

THAT *HURT*, YOU PRICK! GET DOWN FROM THERE!

YEAH? COME UP AND *MAKE ME!*

THUMP

AGH!

南

WHAT IS IT?

AND WHERE *WE* ARE... THEY DREW *THIS*...

THAT'S MIDORIYA-MA-SHI UP IN THE CORNER... BUT THE REST'S TOO BLURRY TO READ...

IT LOOKS LIKE A MAP OF THIS TOWN.

AHMM...

MM...

DAD... TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!

YES, ME TOO.

MOM, I'M WORRIED ABOUT DAD.

...

EVERY-ONE'S ON EDGE.

IT'S... THIS CAN'T GO ON...

I'M THE ONE WHO FOUND IT, YOU THIEVES!

HEY! THROW THAT UP HERE!

TH-THAT'S TOTALLY *UNCALLED* FOR!

THEN WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?! GET THE HELL OUT!

PLEASE STOP...

I'M SORRY, WE RAN OUT YESTERDAY.

I'M HUNGRY! YOU'RE FROM THAT RED CROSS TEAM. DON'T YOU HAVE ANY MORE FOOD?

DO YOU HEAR ME?

YOU! ALL YOU DO IS MUMBLE TO YOURSELF! IT'S GETTIN' ON MY NERVES!

THIS TOWN'S GOING MAD...

MAD... MAD...

BAP

GET OUT!

MAD... MAD...

ARRR ...

HWOO

SHUICHI!

SHUICHI, ARE YOU OKAY?

SLAM

KIRIE, BE CARE-FUL...

NOW WE GOT SOME EXTRA SPACE.

DON'T LET THEM IN AGAIN.

ARRGH!

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NOW?

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS TOWN.

WE CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER.

BUT IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE CROWDED *EVERY-WHERE!*

WE'LL FIND ANOTHER ROW HOUSE...

...BUT THE TUNNEL DIDN'T END.

THE TUNNEL I USED TO GET HERE...I TRIED GOING BACK THROUGH IT. I WAS GOING TO TELL THE REST OF THE WORLD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, ABOUT THE DEATHS OF MY COWORKERS AND THE TOWN...

YES...

JUST ONCE ...

YOU ALREADY TRIED IT YOUR-SELF, DIDN'T YOU?

BUT EVERYONE SAYS IT'S IMPOSSI-BLE.

I'M NOT LEAV-ING.

IT'S OKAY.

BUT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO ESCAPE!

IT'S JUST LIKE SHUICHI SAID... THE SPIRAL WON'T LET US GO.

...TO RE-BUILD MY FURNACE AND WORK ON MY ART...MY ART OF THE SPIRAL.

I WANT TO MAKE CERAM-ICS HERE...

THE MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND? BUT DEAR... DRAGONFLY POND'S A WHIRLPOOL. YOU CAN'T DIG MUD THERE ANYMORE.

FOR THAT, I NEED THE MUD FROM DRAGONFLY POND.

IT'S ROASTING MEAT! IT MUST BE NEARBY.

IT SMELLS GOOD.

SNIFF

WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

OVER THERE...

MITSUO !

I TOLD YOU!

THEY'RE COOKING SOME-THING!

HRRK

IT'S THOSE CREEPY WHIRL-WIND RIDERS!

DON'T GO NEAR THEM!

STOP!

MAYBE THEY'LL SHARE SOME.

LEAVE ME ALONE!

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

MITSUO...!

EXCUSE ME... CAN WE HAVE SOME TOO?

HUH?

CRACKLE CRACKLE

...

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

KICK

YEAH...

I THINK THEY'RE DONE.

THWUD

TOCK

TOCK

GULP

LET'S EAT.

YEAH, THAT'S *PER-FECT.*

THEY'RE DELICIOUS.

YOU CAN HAVE A BITE, KID.

THEY'RE EATING THE SNAILS ...

KIRIE ...

MUNCH

MUNCH

BUT THAT'S NOT ES-CARGOT... THEY'RE *HUMAN...*

THIS STUFF'S VERY TASTY. KEEPS YOU GOING. JUST THINK OF IT AS ESCARGOT.

HOW ABOUT YOU, PRETTY LADIES?

GANG?

WE'RE NOT JOINING YOUR GANG.

WHY DON'T YOU GIRLS STAY HERE, AND YOU CAN EAT LIKE THIS EVERY NIGHT.

WERE HUMAN ... BUT NOT NOW.

DRAGON-FLIES EAT *MEAT.*

WE'RE MORE LIKE *DRAGON-FLIES.*

WE'LL TEACH YOU THINGS...

"THEY'RE FLYING AROUND LIKE BUTTERFLIES!" HA HA! WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

COME ON. WE'LL TEACH YOU TO *FLY.* REMEMBER THOSE LITTLE KIDS WHO DID IT FIRST?

OR YOU'LL GET HURT.

MOVE IT, OLD MAN.

STOP IT. LEAVE US ALONE!

FWOOSH

AWAAH!

I TOLD YOU TO GET AWAY!

WOOO

H-HOW COULD YOU...

WWOOO

DEAR !!

DAD!!

WE COULD BE FRIENDS ...

WE DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT.

WWOOO

BA

FF

WHOOO

WOOO

HOOOOOY

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

WOOO

WHIRRRRRRRRR

CHIE!

TAKE MY HAND!

FORM UP AND PURSUE!

OUR PREY IS ESCAPING AT TWELVE O'CLOCK!

ROGER WILCO!

YAH HAH HAH!

WHOOO

CHIE!

KIRIE!

WE'RE GETTING CLOSER!

IT'S DRAGON-FLY POND!

LOOK OVER THERE!

WE'RE BEING BLOWN IN!

WHOOO

WOOOOOO

WE'LL BE SUCKED INTO THE WHIRL-POOL!

HUH?!

GRAB

WHOOSH

SNAG

WHOOOOO!

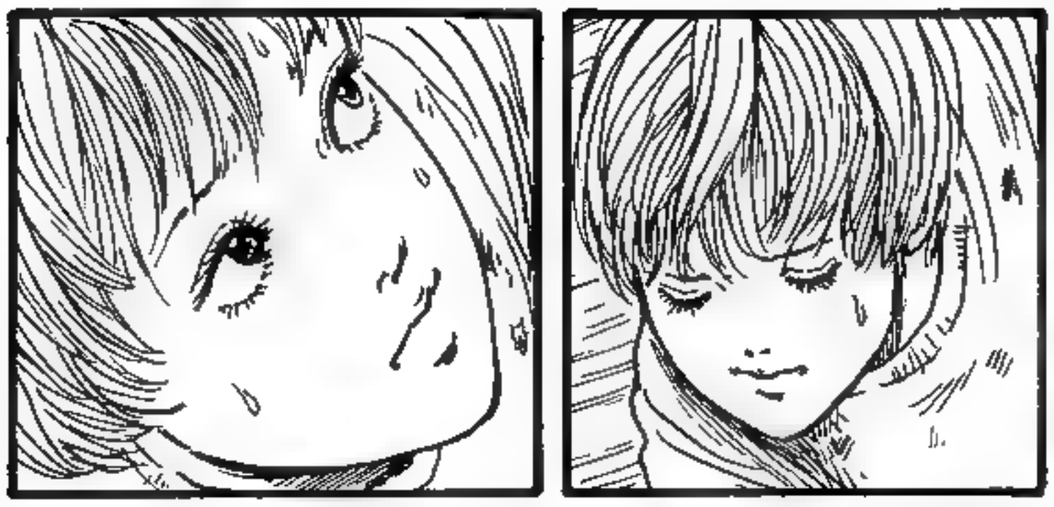
HUH?!

WHO'S THAT?

DO A 180!

WOOOOOO

EEYAAA!



...
MAD
...
BRRR

CHAPTER
16

EROSION

...ONLY TO FIND THEMSELVES TRAPPED IN THE RUINS.

WALK SLOWLY...

SLOWLY ...

PEOPLE STILL POURED INTO KUROUZU-CHO FROM THE OUTSIDE...

IT'S COMING! *GET DOWN!*

THE NUMBER OF WHIRLWINDS KEPT INCREASING, MAKING THE TOWN ALL THE MORE DANGEROUS.

WOOOOOOO

ARRGH!

HEY, YOU!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

ANOTHER POOR DEVIL...

THE WIND'S STILL STIRRED UP FROM THOSE TWISTER GANGS.

YES... WE'RE OKAY.

I HEARD ABOUT A DISASTER HERE, SO I CAME AS AN AID VOLUNTEER.

I WALKED HERE FROM MIDORIYAMA-SHI FIVE DAYS AGO.

...BUT NOW I'M JUST TRYING TO SURVIVE.

I HAVE RELATIVES HERE. I CAME FOUR DAYS AGO LOOKING FOR THEM...

GO IN ANY DIREC-TION, YOU END UP BACK HERE.

SAME HERE.

...BUT NOTHING WORKS.

I'VE TRIED AGAIN AND AGAIN TO ESCAPE... TO TURN AROUND AND WALK A STRAIGHT LINE...

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SOME-THING WAS WRONG. I COULDN'T SEE LIGHT AT THE END...

I TRIED GOING THROUGH THE TUNNEL.

I THINK IT'S TRUE.

AND I'M GOOD WITH DIRECTIONS. IT'S UNNATURAL... AS IF SPACE IS TURNED INSIDE OUT.

I'D BEEN TELLING MYSELF THAT IT WAS JUST ME...THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT...

...AND THEN IT STARTED TO TWIST INTO A SPIRAL THAT PLUNGED INTO DARKNESS.

I FELT LIKE I WAS GOING TO FALL *INTO IT!* I HAD TO CRAWL MY WAY BACK.

SOME OF US DECIDED TO BUILD A RAFT.

ALL THE FISHING BOATS IN THE HARBOR WERE WRECKED. THEY MUST'VE BEEN THE FIRST THINGS TO GO IN THE STORM.

I TRIED TO ESCAPE BY SEA.

ALL RIGHT, HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO...

WHILE WE GATHERED MATERIALS, WE SAW ANOTHER GROUP...

...GOING OUT ON THEIR FINISHED RAFT.

SSLRRR

AAAH!

LOOK!

BUT THEN...

SSHHHRRRR

THE SEA HAD TURNED INTO A GIGANTIC WHIRLPOOL, SWALLOWING THE RAFT RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES.

YEAH... SOME PEOPLE ARE IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE. THEY'VE GONE CRAZY.

OTHER-WISE, WE'RE DOING OKAY.

SO THAT WAY'S OUT.

WE'RE HEADING THERE RIGHT NOW.

NO...ALL THE ROW HOUSES ARE FULL. WE'RE STAYING UNDER A HOUSE THAT'S COL-LAPSED.

BY THE WAY, WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

ARE YOU IN ONE OF THE ROW HOUSES? IF SO, CAN YOU LET US IN? I HEAR THEY'RE THE ONLY SAFE PLACES LEFT.

MY MOTHER WAS HIT BY A WHIRLWIND AND CAN'T MOVE.

DID YOU FIND YOUR FATHER?

NO, I'M FINE. I'M SORRY I CAN'T GET UP...

MOM, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? DOES IT HURT AGAIN?

MOM! *MOM!* I'M SURE HE'S FINE!

I KNEW IT! THAT WHIRLWIND JUST PICKED HIM UP! IT SWALLOWED HIM!

...BEEN NO SIGN.

I'VE LOOKED, BUT SO FAR THERE'S...

LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN FIND.

THE ROW HOUSES ARE SAFEST. THERE MIGHT BE SOME SPACE LEFT.

IT'S STRUCTURALLY UNSTABLE. A WHIRLWIND COULD CRUSH IT EASILY.

SO YOU ACTUALLY LIVE HERE?

ALL THE CONCRETE AND STEEL BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO RUBBLE, BUT THOSE RUNDOWN SHACKS STAY INTACT...

THE ROW HOUSES ARE MYSTIFYING.

MAYBE SOME OF THE OUTLYING HOUSES AREN'T FULL YET... WE COULD TRY THOSE.

I'VE NEVER COUNTED. THEY'RE SO SCATTERED AROUND, SOME ON LOTS SO OVERGROWN YOU'D NEVER GUESS THEY EVEN EXISTED.

HOW MANY ARE THERE, ANYWAY?

YES, AND THEY WERE BUILT A LONG LONG TIME AGO.

KIRIE.

I'M TAKEMO-TO.

OH... I FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. I'M TANIZAKI.

HA HA!

GOOD, BUT AT OUR CURRENT PACE WE WON'T GET THERE BEFORE NIGHTFALL.

SLUMP

WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO REST.

WE'VE ALL MET IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, WALKING AROUND.

SHF

CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK?

NO...MY BACK FEELS FUNNY...

YOUR BACK?

YOU ALL RIGHT, OKAMOTO? ARE YOU SICK?

AHH!

HE'LL BE A SNAIL PERSON SOON.

HE'S BEGUN TO CHANGE.

WHAT...?

...SLOW ENOUGH FOR THE SPIRAL TO CATCH THEM.

WE MIGHT BE NEXT.

MAYBE... BECAUSE THEY'RE MOVING SO SLOW...

WHY IS IT HAPPENING TO SO MANY PEOPLE, SHUICHI?

WHEW!

IT'S FINE.

M-ME TOO!

HEY... LOOK AT MY BACK FOR ME...

HOW ABOUT ME?

QUIET! QUIET! YOU'LL CAUSE A WHIRLWIND!

SO I'M GOING TO TURN INTO A SNAIL TOO? TELL ME THAT'S NOT TRUE! *PLEASE!*

WHAT? YOU'RE KIDDING!

TOGAWA... YOU'VE GOT A SPIRAL...

OH GOD! THAT'S A LIE!

WE WON'T HAVE TO MOVE SO SLOWLY THEN.

IN ANY CASE, WE HAVE TO FIND A ROW HOUSE WITH SPACE TO SLEEP.

...SO WE CAN ONLY GO ON WHAT WE DO KNOW.

YES ...

I MEAN, WE REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT'S MAKING PEOPLE CHANGE INTO SNAILS.

BUT HOW SAFE DO YOU THINK THESE HOUSES ARE?

SHHH! LOWER YOUR VOICE.

I DON'T WANT TO...I DON'T WANT TO!

TANIZAKI... DO YOU THINK THIS SPIRAL WILL DISAPPEAR ONCE I'M INSIDE A ROW HOUSE?

I DON'T KNOW, TOGAWA.

AND WALK SOFTLY.

SOME-BODY HELP ME!

I-I DON'T WANT TO TURN INTO A SNAIL!

HERE IT IS.

WE SHOULD SEE ONE SOON.

LOOKS LIKE IT'S FULL.

THEY'RE *ALL* FULL! IF WE STAY OUTSIDE WE MIGHT TURN INTO THOSE THINGS. YOU HAVE TO HELP US!

WHO CARES? GO AWAY!

PLEASE LET US IN!

NO! IT'S FULL! GO SOMEWHERE ELSE.

I'M TURNING INTO A *SNAIL!*

PLEASE LET ME IN...

TOGAWA ...

PLEASE ... PLEASE ...

DAMN YOU!!

BUT ...

WHAT DO I CARE IF YOU BECOME A SNAIL OR NOT?

NO! GO AWAY!

OPEN UP!

OPEN UP, YOU BAS-TARDS!

I'M GOING INSIDE WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT!

HERE IT COMES ...

PULL!

WE'RE WITH YOU!

Y-YES...

SHFF

?!

GET OUT OF HERE!

STOP IT!

PULL!

IT'S OPEN-ING!

YAAA!

FWOO!

WHAT'RE YOU KIDS DOING?

WOOOO

YOU'RE INHUMAN!

BASTARDS! HOW COULD YOU?

GET THEM!

YEAH!

THAT'S IT!

KEEP ON COMPLAINING AND WE'LL BLOW YOU AWAY!

FWOO!

TAKE THIS!

FWOOO!

WAAGH!

HWRRRRR

KRRR

ATTACK !!

NOW!

WE'VE BROKEN IN! LET'S GO!

HUH?

KRAK

WHOOO

OOOO

CRICK

WH... WHAT THE HELL...?!

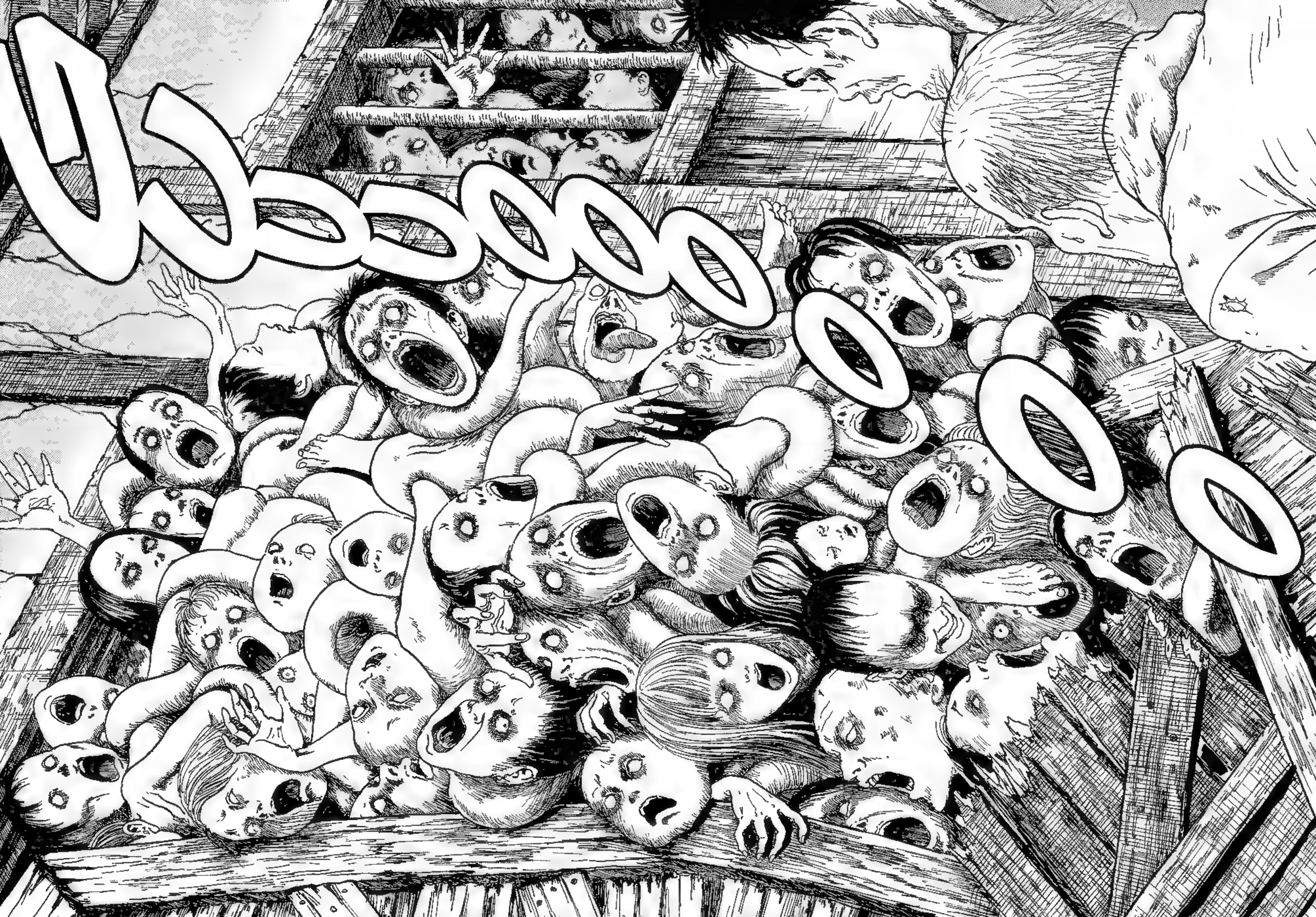
THIS IS THE RESULT...

NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRIED TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT, THEY MANAGED TO SNEAK IN.

I TOLD YOU IT WAS FULL.

...AND NOW WE CAN'T BE SEPAR-ATED...

OUR BODIES PRESSED TOGETHER BECAME TIED IN KNOTS...


ううううう

CRIIICK
CRIIICK

CRICK
CRICK

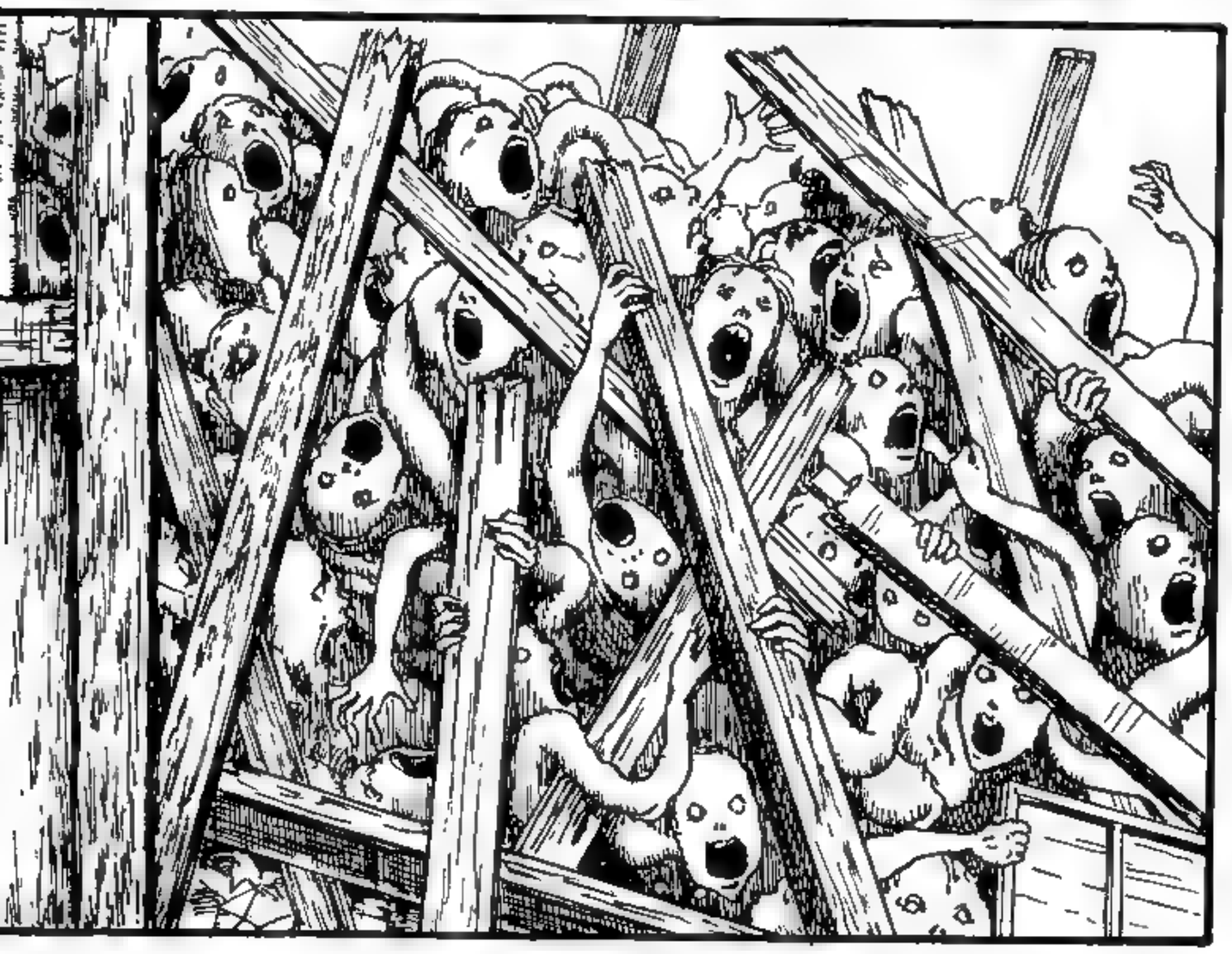
KRAAA

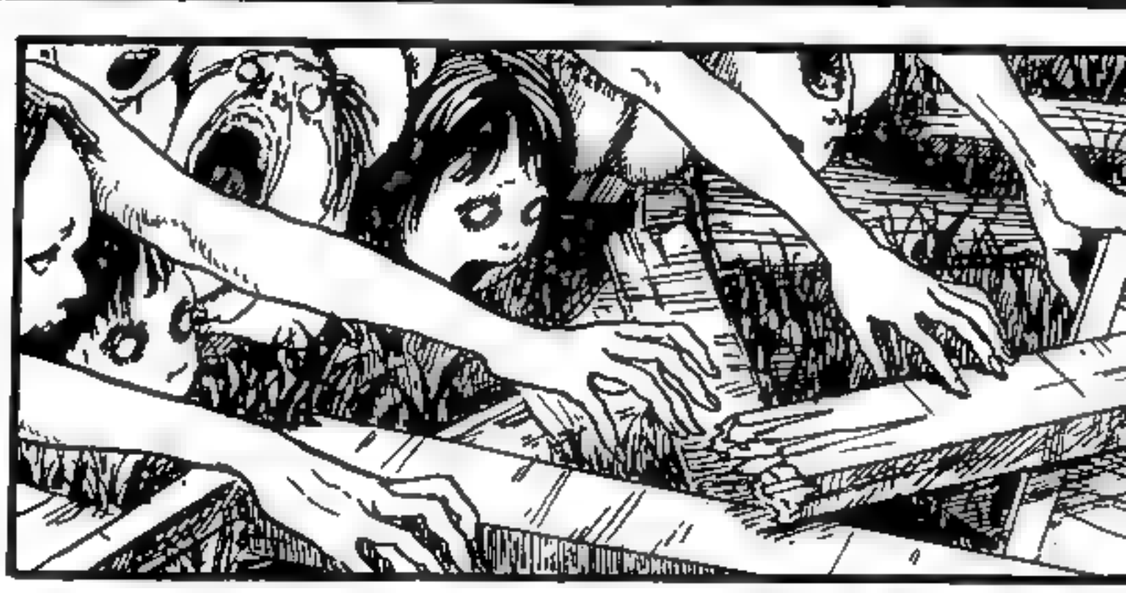
KRAAA

WOOOOOOO

OOOO

WHOO





WHAT'RE THEY DOING?

SHEDDING

COVERING THEIR EXPOSED BODIES WITH THE SCRAP WOOD, I THINK.

AND ADD ONTO THE HOUSE, TOO.

SO THERE'S THAT OPTION ...

HMM ...

DID THIS HAPPEN IN ALL THE ROW HOUSES?

S-SO...

THEY'RE THE ONLY REFUGE LEFT. IF WE EXPAND ONE HORIZONTALLY WE COULD MAKE ENOUGH ROOM FOR OURSELVES.

...WHAT IF WE FIND A ROW HOUSE AND EXTEND IT?

HEY...

EXPAND A ROW HOUSE? WE SHOULD BE THINKING OF WAYS TO ESCAPE.

YOU DON'T PLAN ON STAYING HERE FOR GOOD, DO YOU?

...WHICH WOULD BE LIVING HELL.

AND EVEN IF WE DID AS YOU SUGGEST, WE'D TURN INTO ONE OF THOSE MON-STERS...

ARGH!

WHOOOO

HUH ?!

GET DOWN!

SO WHAT'LL IT BE? DIE IN A WHIRLWIND, OR LIVE IN A ROW HOUSE?

THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S HELL EITHER WAY!

I SEE SHIPS! LOTS OF SHIPS!

WHAT IS IT?!

THAT'S RIGHT! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY!

I WANT TO *GET OUT!*

LOOK OVER THERE!

RESCUE SHIPS!

A WHOLE TASK FORCE SENT TO SAVE US!

THEY CERTAINLY TOOK THEIR TIME!

YEAH! WHAT KEPT 'EM?

WE'RE OUT-TA HERE.

FROM THE COAST GUARD AND THE SELF DEFENSE FLEET. EXCEL-LENT.

KIRIE, YOU LOOK DOUBT-FUL!

C'MON, WE HAVE TO TELL YOUR MOTHER.

HUH?!

...I STILL HAVE TO FIND MY DAD.

I KNOW, BUT...

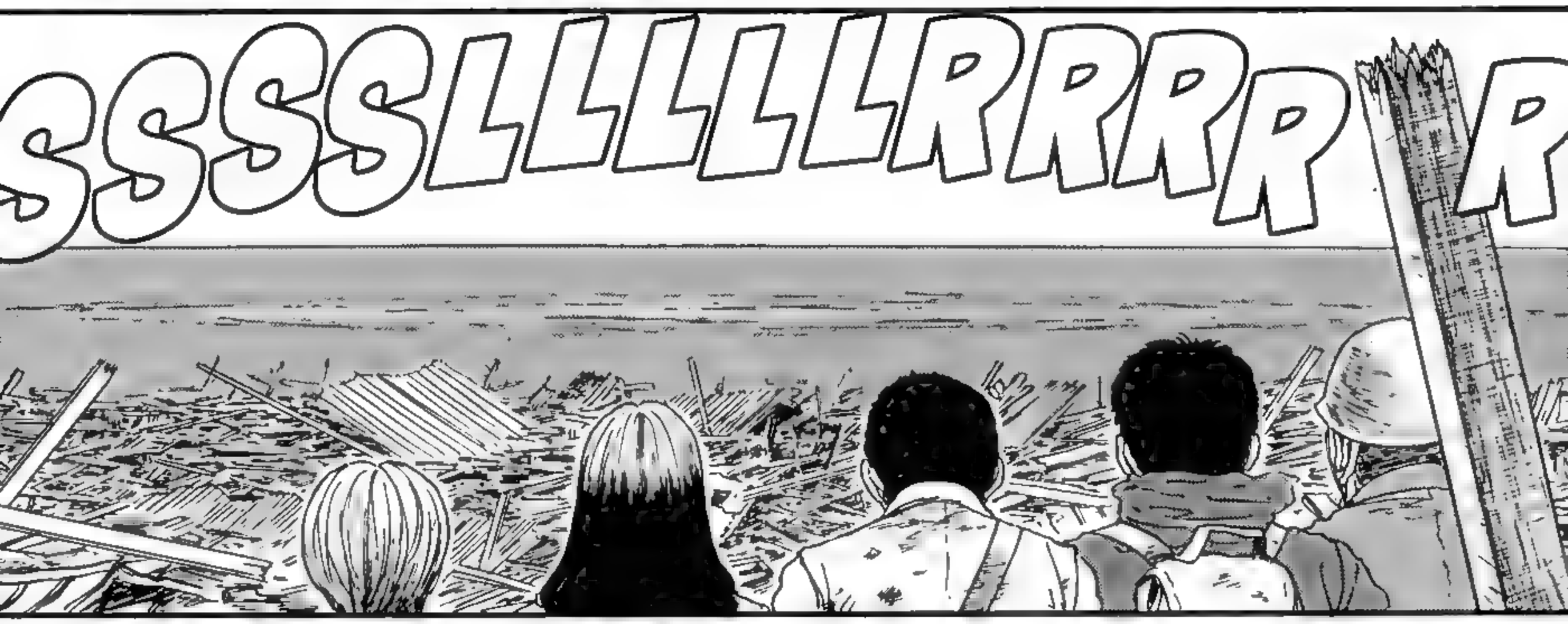
THEY CAN'T TAKE ME ABOARD SOON ENOUGH!

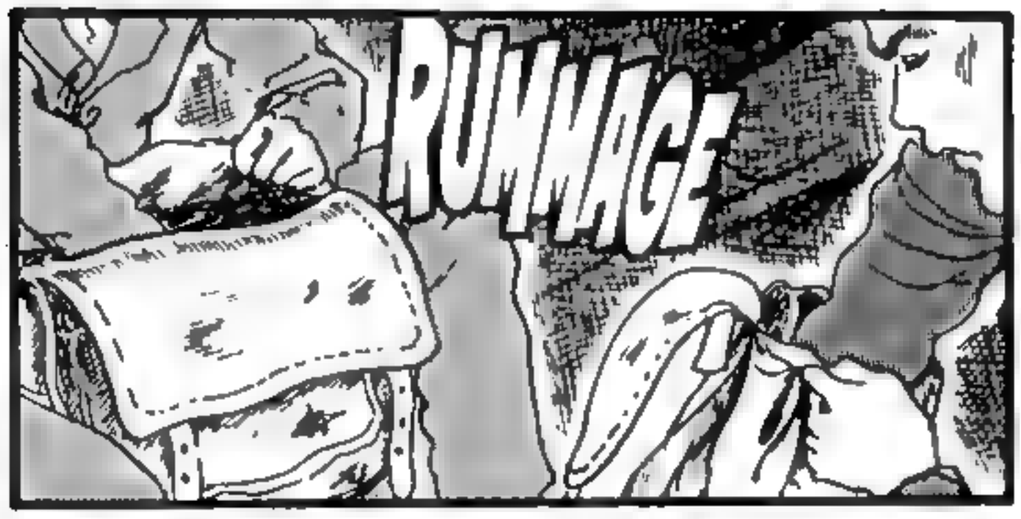
WHO CARES? THEY'RE HERE.

SS SSH HH HH HH

SSSSLLLLLRRR

IT CAN'T BE...
NO...


SSSSLLLLRRRR


RUMMAGE

IS THIS ALL WE HAVE LEFT?

IT'S DARK NOW...

I FOUND SOME MEAT!

HEY EVERY-ONE!

ISN'T THERE ANYTHING IN TOWN? SOME CANNED FOOD?

RUMB

IT ISN'T ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN US.

PROBABLY LEFT HERE BY A GANG.

SOMEONE COOKED ONE OF THOSE SNAIL PEO...SNAILS.

WHAT? REALLY?!

...

GULP

...YOU MEANT BY MEAT?

S-SO THIS IS WHAT...

MUNCH MUNCH

MUNCH MUNCH

WE DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE.

UM...

WE HAVE TO...

IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S REALLY HUMAN ANYMORE.

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE CHOOSY.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME.

KIRIE...IT DOESN'T TASTE BAD.

WE'D BETTER SEE HE DOESN'T WANDER OFF, THOUGH ... Y'KNOW ?

OKAMOTO'S NOT DIGGING IN. POOR GUY... GUESS I CAN'T REALLY BLAME HIM.

YEAH.

IF I'D KNOWN IT WAS THIS GOOD I'D'VE EATEN ONE SOONER.

...

EAT!

AS FOR YOU TWO...

...CAN YOU AFFORD TO BE SQUEA-MISH?

MUNCH MUNCH

MUNCH MUNCH

...THE MEAT OF A SNAIL PERSON.

THAT NIGHT, I ATE...

SHUICHI...

HM?

WE BROUGHT THE LAST SCRAPS OF MEAT WITH US IN AN OLD PLASTIC BAG.

NEXT MORNING WE LEFT TANIZAKI'S GROUP AND HEADED BACK TO THE SHACK WHERE MY MOTHER AND MITSUO WERE STAYING.

...

N-NO...

I THOUGHT IT WAS AROUND HERE.

THE SHACK IS GONE!

IT WAS A WHIRLWIND, RIGHT?

I'LL GET YOU OUT!

KIRIE! I'M STUCK!

MITSUO!

KIRIE!

KIRIE...

KIRIE...

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

MITSUO, WHERE'S MOM?

MOM!

SH-SHE GOT BLOWN AWAY!

AT THAT MOMENT ...

...I KNEW I HAD TO ESCAPE.

CHAPTER

17

ESCAPE

...BEFORE HE BECOMES A SNAIL PERSON.

WE'RE GOING.

HE'LL BE BACK TO NORMAL ONCE WE GET AWAY.

I'VE GOT TO GET MITSUO OUT OF HERE...

...AND CAN COME BACK FOR MY PARENTS.

AFTER THAT I'LL KNOW THE WAY OUT...

WHAT ABOUT THE HILLS?

WE CAN'T GO BY THE ROAD OR BY SEA.

BUT HOW ARE WE SUP-POSED TO GET OUT?

THE SPI-RAL'S ALL AROUND US.

IT'S NO USE.

MAYBE THERE'S A TRAIL NO ONE'S TRIED.

THE HILLS? I CAN'T IMAGINE IT'S THAT EASY.

TOCK

FWUF

HERE.

WE COULDN'T DECIDE WHICH WAY TO GO, BUT WE HAD NO TIME TO DEBATE.

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TRY IT. NORTH IT IS.

SO WE END UP WITH THE STEEP HILL.

IT'S NO USE...

SHWOOOO

HANG ON, YOU'LL BE FINE.

SCRITCH

SCRITCH

WE'LL BE OUT OF HERE SOON.

CAN YOU SCRATCH IT?

KIRIE, MY BACK ITCHES...

...ALL THE ROW HOUSES FACE DRAGON-FLY POND?

HEY, DID YOU NO-TICE...

UP HERE WE CAN SEE HOW EVERYTHING'S GONE EXCEPT THE ROW HOUSES.

WHAT?

BAM BAM BAM

FACING DRAGON-FLY POND?

LOOK OVER THERE!

THAT'S ...

THE WIND'S COMING FROM THAT MAN ON THE ROW HOUSE! HE'S NAILING PLANKS TO THE ROOF!

...MR. TANIZAKI!

HWOOOOO

I'LL BE DONE WHEN YOU RETURN! *THERE'LL BE A PLACE FOR ALL OF YOU!*

HEY YOU! ARE YOU TRYING TO ESCAPE?!

WHOOOOOOOOOOOO

ALL AROUND THE TOWN, PEOPLE WERE ADDING EXTENSIONS TO THE HOUSES.

WHEN I LOOKED CLOSER, I SAW THAT MR. TANIZAKI WASN'T ALONE.

L-LET'S GO.

WHOOO

WHOOOOOO

IT SOUNDED OFF AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS, AS IF SIGNALING THE ESCAPE OF PRISONERS.

THE POWER HAD BEEN OFF SINCE THE STORM, BUT THE SIREN STILL BLARED.

WHOOOOO

WHOOOOOO

THAT SOUND!

IT STABS THROUGH MY EARS!

ARGH! COME ON!

THE GRASS, THE TREES...

HOW LONG HAVE THEY BEEN LIKE THIS?

NOT MUCH FURTHER...IT SHOULD LEAD TO A PAVED ROAD SOON.

WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOR A WHILE...HOW FAR DOES THIS TRAIL GO?

...AT THE LEVEL OF GROWING CELLS.

THE SPIRAL'S HERE...

HUFF

BUT IT'S LONGER THAN I REMEMBER.

HUFF

KIRIE, MY BACK HURTS... WE'RE GOING TOO FAST...

HUFF

AH!

LOOKS LIKE MORE PEOPLE COMING IN...

TMP

TMP

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHERE ARE *YOU* GOING?

WHAT?

WHY'D YOU COME THIS WAY?

MR. TAKEMOTO?

WE JUST LEFT TOWN TOO.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE ROAD'S THIS WAY.

THERE'S A MOUNTAIN ROAD THAT'S SUPPOSED TO LEAD TO THE NEXT TOWN.

WE'RE TRYING TO GET OUT OF KUROUZU-CHO.

IT SEEMS YOU CAME BACK HERE WITHOUT REALIZING IT.

WE TOOK THE TRAIL RIGHT BY KUROUZU HIGH SCHOOL.

WHICH TRAIL DID YOU TAKE?

SO WE WERE JUST FOLLOWING YOU.

WE TOOK THE SAME ONE BECAUSE WE SAW YOU AHEAD.

NONE OF THESE PATHS WORKS! THEY ALL LEAD BACK!

DAMN IT, I'M SICK OF THIS!

LOOKS LIKE IT.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW? IF WE KEEP GOING, WE'LL PROBABLY END UP BACK HERE AGAIN.

BEST THING IS TO KEEP MOVING.

CALM DOWN! WE CAN'T GIVE UP YET!

WE'LL NEVER GET OUT!

HUH?

WHY IS HE ON A LEAD?

OH, YOU MEAN OKAMOTO?

HE'S THE MOST VITAL MEMBER OF OUR PARTY!

IT'S TO MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T RUN OFF!

HE'S OUR EMERGENCY FOOD SUPPLY. WE DIDN'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'D BE OUT HERE. ONCE HE'S FULLY A SNAIL, WE CAN EAT HIM.

LOOK AT THAT SHELL. AND IT'S *FULL OF MEAT!*

HUFF

HUFF

KIRIE, *MY BACK* ITCHES!

PLEASE SCRATCH IT!

I CAN'T LOOK AT THIS.

IT MAKES ME DIZZY.

SHLOOOP

TOMP

SMUDGER SMUDGER

HA HA HA!

WELL... LOOK AT THAT!

SHLUP SHLUP

I'M STARVING!

GRRM

URR...

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES.

DAMN...

GULP

HE'S REALLY A SNAIL NOW.

LOOK AT OKAMOTO.

YEAH, GOOD IDEA...

I-I'D LIKE TO TRY ONE RAW.

RAW?

NO...

IT'S TIME. WANNA COOK HIM?

HE'S HIDING FROM US!

HEY!

R.F.Z R.F.Z

I'LL SHOW YOU THE BEST WAY TO EAT HIM!

JUST WATCH ...

HOLD IT! YOU'LL MAKE A WHIRLWIND IF YOU THROW THAT.

LET'S JUST CRACK HIM OPEN.

SLURP

DID YOU KNOW THAT SOME INSECTS EAT SNAILS THIS WAY?

GULP

MUN CH

MUN CH MUN CH

HOW IS IT?

IS IT GOOD ?

MUN CH

MUN CH

RN CH

RN CH

NCH NCH

ROLLLLL

SLRR SLRR

MUNCH MUNCH

CRUNCH

DON'T EAT ALL OF IT! COME OUT!

Y-YOU BAS-TARD!

H-HEY, THAT'S ENOUGH!

COME ON!

MIT-SUO!

OKAY ...

KIRIE, LET'S GO NOW... WHILE THEY'RE BUSY.

WE SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM THEM.

THE SPIRAL HAS THEM...

I SAID IT WAS USE-LESS...

IT'S ALL AROUND ...IN US, THROUGH US...

I WONDER WHERE WE ARE?

D-DON'T ASK ME...

YOU CAN TELL NORTH BY LOOKING AT A TREE STUMP.

THAT'S RIGHT!

COME JOIN ME...

SHUI-CHI...

UWAAA!

CALM DOWN. YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING IT!!

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?

D-D-DAD! *DAD!* IT'S *MY DAD!*

IT'S *HIM!* IT'S *HIM!*

WHAT TIME IS IT ANYWAY ?

TICK TICK

HUFF

WE'RE WALKING SO SLOW...

IT FEELS LIKE TIME... IS LEAVING US BEHIND.

HUFF HUFF

SO SLOW ...

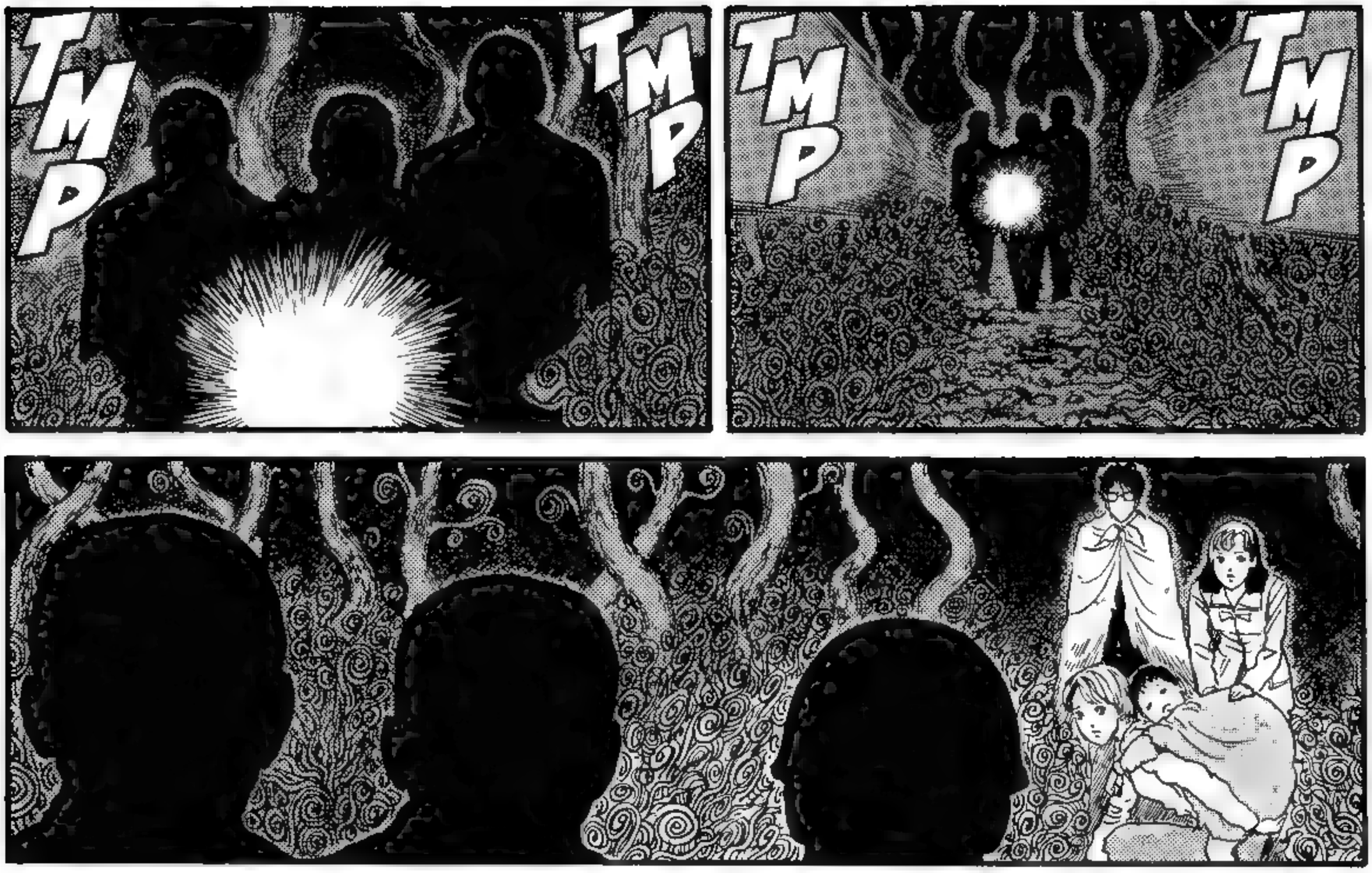
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH

MUNCH

MMMP

MITSUO, THOSE LEAVES AREN'T GOOD FOR YOU!

I'LL CARRY YOU IF YOU'RE TIRED.


TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

WE... WE JUST GOT LOST...

OH...

WHY DID YOU LEAVE US?

WE MEET AGAIN.

HEY...

...

HE MUST BE TIRED, POOR KID...

AWW... THE KID'S SLEEPING ON HIS SISTER'S BACK. HOW SWEET.

WHAT?

IT LOOKS SO SWOLLEN...

WHAT'S WITH HIS BACK?

OH...UH... THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S CARRYING A BACKPACK.

I'LL CARRY HIM.

YOU MUST BE TIRED. GIVE HIM TO ME.

WELL... LET'S GO ON TOGETH-ER, OKAY?

MM... I SEE...

TUG

WE HAVE A WAYS TO GO. COME ON!

NO YOU'RE NOT.

NO, NO...I'M FINE.

I'LL TAKE HIM.

O-OKAY.

YOU'RE SPOILED. THEY'RE NOT EASY TO FIND UP HERE IN THE HILLS.

AREN'T THERE ANY SNAILS AROUND HERE?

I'M GETTING HUNGRY AGAIN...

THAT'S TOO BAD.

MM... WELL...

N-NO... JUST SOME CLOTHES.

IS THERE SOME FOOD IN YOUR BROTHER'S BACKPACK?

!

ANYWAY, I WAS THINK-ING...

NOTH-ING'S WRONG.

WHAT'S WRONG?

AAH!

FWOO

PLOP

PLOP

?!

SHUUP

YAAAH!

DON'T SQUIRM AROUND BACK THERE!

S-STOP IT, MITSUO!

RUN FOR IT!

HOW SHOULD WE EAT THIS ONE?

I KNEW IT...

TMP TMP

TMP TMP

STOP!

TMP TMP TMP

HUFF

HUFF

DON'T RUN. SLOW AND STEADY DOES IT...

THERE THEY ARE!

WE WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN!

HOW'D WE GET HERE?

SHAAA

SHAAA

MITSUO HAS TO ESCAPE BEFORE THEY GET HERE.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

BUT HOW?

ES-CAPE?

THEN GO! GET AWAY!

YOU CAN?

SHAAA

CAN YOU CRAWL DOWN THIS CLIFF?

MIT-SUO...

NO, MITSUO... GO! PLEASE!

SHAAA

GO NOW!

YOU HAVE TO HURRY!

GO!

POKE

GO, MITSUO!

POKE

SHAAA

I-I'LL HIT YOU IF YOU DON'T!

I PROMISE I'LL COME BACK AND GET YOU!

SHAAA

HAND OVER THAT SNAIL!

MM... STILL TRYING TO ESCAPE?

ACT LIKE WE'RE STILL CARRYING MITSUO.

WE'LL FIND MITSUO LATER.

WE HAVE NO CHOICE. LET'S KEEP GOING.

ARE YOU GOING TO GO BACK? HA HA HA...

HEY, KUROUZU-CHO'S THAT WAY!

REMEMBER WHAT OKAMOTO TASTED LIKE?

OF COURSE WE WILL.

HEY, WILL WE EAT IT RAW?

...FITTING YOUR WHOLE BODY INTO THOSE WET, WONDERFUL CURVES...

THAT SENSATION OF BEING INSIDE HIS SHELL, CHEWING ON THE SOFT PARTS OF HIS FACE...

JUST THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO...

THAT MAGICAL SPACE... MADE ME FEEL LIKE MY BODY WAS BECOMING A *SPIRAL!*

UUOOH!

UUOOH!

AHH...

UP AHEAD ...

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

IT'S IN US...

SHF SHF SHF

TWITCH TWITCH

SHF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

WE SHOULD BE NEAR THE TOWN BY NOW.

HUFF

WHAT ...?!

...

CHAPTER
18
THE LABYRINTH

WE ENDED UP SOME-WHERE STRANGE AGAIN.

THIS ISN'T KUROUZU-CHO.

WHERE ARE WE?

HUH?

DOESN'T THAT BUILDING LOOK FAMILIAR?

...

THIS *IS* KUROUZU-CHO. LOOK OVER THERE.

LET'S... LET'S GO DOWN AND SEE.

B-BUT HOW?!

THAT'S *ALL* THE ROW HOUSES, EXTENDED AND JOINED TOGETHER.

THAT'S THE ROW HOUSE?!

I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING MAD.

HOW DID OUR TOWN TURN INTO THIS?

HUFF

HUFF

SHF SHF

BUILDING THEM OUT ON BOTH SIDES RESULTED IN THEM CONNECTING UP LIKE THIS.

REMEMBER HOW PEOPLE ALL OVER TOWN WERE EXPANDING THE ROW HOUSES?

WHAT?!

THE SURVIVORS, *THEY* DID ALL THIS.

THEY *BUILT* THEM...

WE WERE ONLY IN THE HILLS FOR...

IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN A FEW DAYS TO BUILD ALL THIS.

I...I CAN'T RECALL ...

WAIT...HOW LONG *WERE* WE THERE?

THEY'D JUST STARTED DOING THAT WHEN WE LEFT TOWN.

B-BUT THAT'S CRAZY...

IN A TIME SPIRAL ...

WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN AWAY A LOT LONGER THAN WE THINK.

HWOOOOOO

ALL THE ROW HOUSES...

LOOK!

YES, I WAS RIGHT.

HWOOOOOO

SEE THERE? THAT'S THE AD-DITION.

THAT PART'S THE ORIGINAL HOUSE.

HOW DID THEY MANAGE TO MAKE THEM FIT SO PERFECTLY?

AS IF THEY'D PLANNED ON THIS MASSIVE SPIRAL STRUCTURE...

BUT IT'S WEIRD... THEY WEREN'T WORKING TOGETHER...

BUT IT GRADUALLY FELL APART OVER THE YEARS, LEAVING BEHIND THESE SCATTERED RUINS.

MAYBE THIS WHOLE TOWN WAS A SPIRAL.

MAYBE THESE ROW HOUSES FORMED A SPIRAL A LONG TIME AGO.

MAYBE IT WASN'T CONSCIOUS...

HUH?

AND WHAT THE HELL DO WE DO NOW?

WHAT... WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

...

...MAY BE A RECON-STRUC-TION OF HOW KUROUZU-CHO USED TO BE.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING AT NOW...

I'LL COME BACK AND JOIN YOU...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME. YOU SHOULD TRY TO GET OUT OF HERE.

...TO FIND MY MOTHER AND FATHER.

I'M GOING IN THERE...

WE'LL HELP FIND YOUR PARENTS.

COME ON, KIRIE.

THERE MUST BE AN ENTRANCE TO THE ALLEYS WE SAW AS WE CAME INTO TOWN.

SOLID... SEALED OFF...

ONE ALLEY ACTUALLY, CURVING ALONG WITH THE ROW HOUSES.

...WE FOUND THE WAY INTO THE ALLEY.

WE WALKED FURTHER, AND AT LAST...

THIS IS ODD...

I CAN HARDLY THINK STRAIGHT ANY-MORE...

IT MAKES ME DIZZY ...

WHY IS THAT?

YOU'RE RIGHT.

WHIFF

IT'S BEEN LIKE THIS SINCE WE ENTERED THE ALLEY.

I MOVE MY ARM, AND NO TWISTERS!

KIRIE, THINK OF WHERE WE ARE...

SAFE?

MAYBE BECAUSE WE'RE SURROUNDED BY THE ROW HOUSES.

THEN WE'RE SAFE IN HERE?

CREAK

HWOO

CREAK

CREAK

CREAK

MURMUR MURMUR...

CREAK

MRR MRR...

MUMBLE MUMBLE...

SO PEOPLE ARE LIVING HERE...

I NEED TO TALK TO SOME-ONE.

EXCUSE ME, IS THERE ANYONE IN THERE?

MY FATHER'S NAME IS YASUO GOSHIMA. HE'S A POTTER.

I'M LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS.

PLEASE GET RID OF WHAT WE'RE ABOUT TO TOSS OUT.

WHAT ?

COULD YOU DO US A FAVOR, THOUGH?

I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT YOUR PARENTS.

SCRZ

WHUD

IT WAS AN ORDEAL TO UNTANGLE OURSELVES FROM THAT CORPSE...

PLEASE TAKE IT SOMEWHERE AND BURN IT... THE SMELL WILL BE UNBEARABLE SOON...

HE DIED THIS MORNING.

LET'S JUST GO!

AHH ...

WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

PEW!

CREAK

CREAK

MBL MBL

MBL MBL

MUR MUR...

CREAK

THEY'VE BEEN HERE A WHILE.

MORE CORP-SES... DECAY-ING...

YOU THERE ...

SAY ...

THEY TURNED INTO SPIRALS AND DIED...

I'M LOOK-ING FOR MY PAR-ENTS.

UM... MAYBE YOU COULD HELP ME.

THE SMELL IS SO BAD.

COULD YOU TAKE THOSE WITH YOU?

SHLF

SHLF

SHLF

SHLF

WHAT WOULD I KNOW ABOUT YOUR PAR-ENTS?

SHLF

SHLF

SHLF

WELL, WHAT'S ONE MORE, GIVE OR TAKE?

MM... ANOTHER ONE!

AREN'T YOU MR. TANIZAKI?!

MR. TANIZAKI!

OH...

DID YOU SAY... YEARS?

HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN? YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT.

YOU... I DO RECALL...

THAT'S WHY I'M IN CHARGE OF CLEANING UP.

THE USELESS RUBBLE AND CONCRETE IS PILED UP IN THE ALLEY FURTHER ON. IT'S LIKE A LABYRINTH NOW.

YES...THE EXPANSION IS ALMOST COMPLETE, BUT THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL GAPS.

MR. TANI-ZAKI ...

...AND THE PACE HAS PICKED UP.

EVERYONE ELSE HAS GONE INSIDE THE ROW HOUSES. BUT THEY'LL BE FINISHED SOON...THEY'RE BUILDING FROM INSIDE...

A POT-TER?

MY FATHER IS A POTTER.

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR MY PARENTS. THEY WERE BOTH CAUGHT IN WHIRL-WINDS.

HAVEN'T SEEN THEM MYSELF.

UH-HUH...

REALLY?!

WHAT?!

OH... CERAMICS... YEAH, I HEARD ABOUT A COUPLE THAT WAS STILL MAKING POTTERY BY DRAGONFLY POND.

THAT'S WONDER-FUL, KIRIE!

THEY'RE *ALIVE!*

TH-THAT'S HIM! THAT'S HIM!

I HEARD HE SAYS, "CERAMICS IS THE ART OF THE SPIRAL."

EVEN I'VE NEVER BEEN TO DRAGONFLY POND.

BUT IT WON'T BE EASY TO GET THERE! THERE'S LOTS OF DEADFALLS FURTHER ON.

YOU DO THAT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH, MR. TANIZAKI! I'M GOING THERE NOW.

AND ...

...THE FURTHER WE WENT, THE MORE AREAS WE SAW UNDER CONSTRUC-TION.

AS MR. TANIZAKI SAID...

...TO MAKE OUR WAY THROUGH THE LABYRINTH.

...WE FOUND OUR WAY BLOCKED BY HEAPS OF RUBBLE WE WERE TOO TIRED TO CLIMB. WE'D GO THROUGH GAPS...

THERE'S A GAP OVER THERE.

I WONDER WHERE WE ARE?

ANOTHER DEAD END.

CHATTER

BAM TAP

TAP TAP

SZZ SZZ

BAM BAM

I WONDER IF ALL THE BUILDINGS IN TOWN...

THERE'S A GAP OVER THERE.

KWOOO

MAYBE...

WELL, WHATEVER'S URGING PEOPLE TO BUILD THESE HOUSES...

...MUST BE EX-TREMELY POWER-FUL.

...WHY WAS IT ONCE LIKE THIS?

IF SHUICHI IS RIGHT, THAT THIS IS BASED ON THE TOWN'S PAST...

...AND WHEN IT DOES, THE INHABITANTS REBUILD THE TOWN IN THIS SHAPE.

THAT EVERY CENTURY, OR EVERY FEW CENTURIES, THE SPIRAL COMES TO HAUNT THIS TOWN...

...MAYBE IT'S HAPPENED OVER AND OVER SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.

WHAT?

NO...

OR WAS IT TOO LONG AGO?

BUT WOULDN'T THERE BE RECORDS OF THIS?

IT COULD BE THAT EVERY PERSON WHO COULD HAVE TOLD THE STORY VANISHED.

MAYBE ALL MEMORIES OF IT WERE LOST.

LOST?

AND YET... THE STORY WAS NEVER PASSED ON.

...THE ROW HOUSES ARE MADE OF WOOD SO THEY CAN'T BE THAT OLD.

LOOK UP THERE.

HEY.

I CAN'T GO ON... I CAN'T WALK...

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

AS WE WENT ON, WE LOST TRACK OF WHICH WAY WE WERE GOING.

FROM A CREMATION, I THINK.

SMOKE ...

THE SMOKE WILL GUIDE US.

SO THE POND'S THAT WAY!

IT'S SPIRALING DOWN TO DRAGONFLY POND.

DAMN IT! ANOTHER DEAD END!

HUFF

HUFF

HURRY... BEFORE IT DISAPPEARS!!

COME ON!

HURRY, OR THIS WAY WILL BE SEALED!

OKAY!

LOOK! THERE'S A GAP RIGHT THERE!

NO!

JUNK

SZZ

BAM

CHIE!

CHIE!

CHIE?!

BANG

KIRIE...

WE'RE ALL CONNECTED...

WE'RE CONNECTED HERE TOO...

WE'RE CONNECTED...

OVER HERE TOO...

SLIDE

SLIDE

SLIDE

CHK

...WE'LL HAVE NO TROUBLE REACH-ING DRAGON-FLY POND.

IF WE GO INSIDE, I BELIEVE...

I THINK THE ROW HOUSES HAVE EMP-TIED OUT.

NOT ANY-MORE.

CHIE... CHIE'S INSIDE...

CREEEAK

AT THE END ...

WE WALKED THROUGH THE ROW HOUSES, WHICH FORMED A TUNNEL THAT CURVED TIGHTER AND TIGHTER.

WH-
WHAT IS
THIS?!

WEREN'T THEY MAKING POTTERY HERE?

AND MY MOTHER AND FATHER?

THE WATER'S RECEDED...

THIS MUST HAVE BEEN DRAGONFLY POND.

IF THEY WERE HERE, THEY'RE NOT HERE NOW.

KIRIE ...

...MUST'VE ...WELL, EMPTIED INTO THIS.

THE ROW HOUSES ...

SOME-ONE BUILT THESE SPIRAL STAIRS. THEY LOOK ANCIENT.

LOOK DOWN THERE. IT WAS HERE ALL THIS TIME, THIS WELL AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POND.

HOW FAR DOWN DOES IT GO?

WHEN WAS IT BUILT? WHO BUILT IT? WHY?

THE CAUSE OF THE SPIRAL CURSE HAUNTING THIS TOWN MIGHT BE DOWN THERE...

THE ONLY PLACE MY PARENTS COULD BE.

...I'M GOING DOWN THERE.

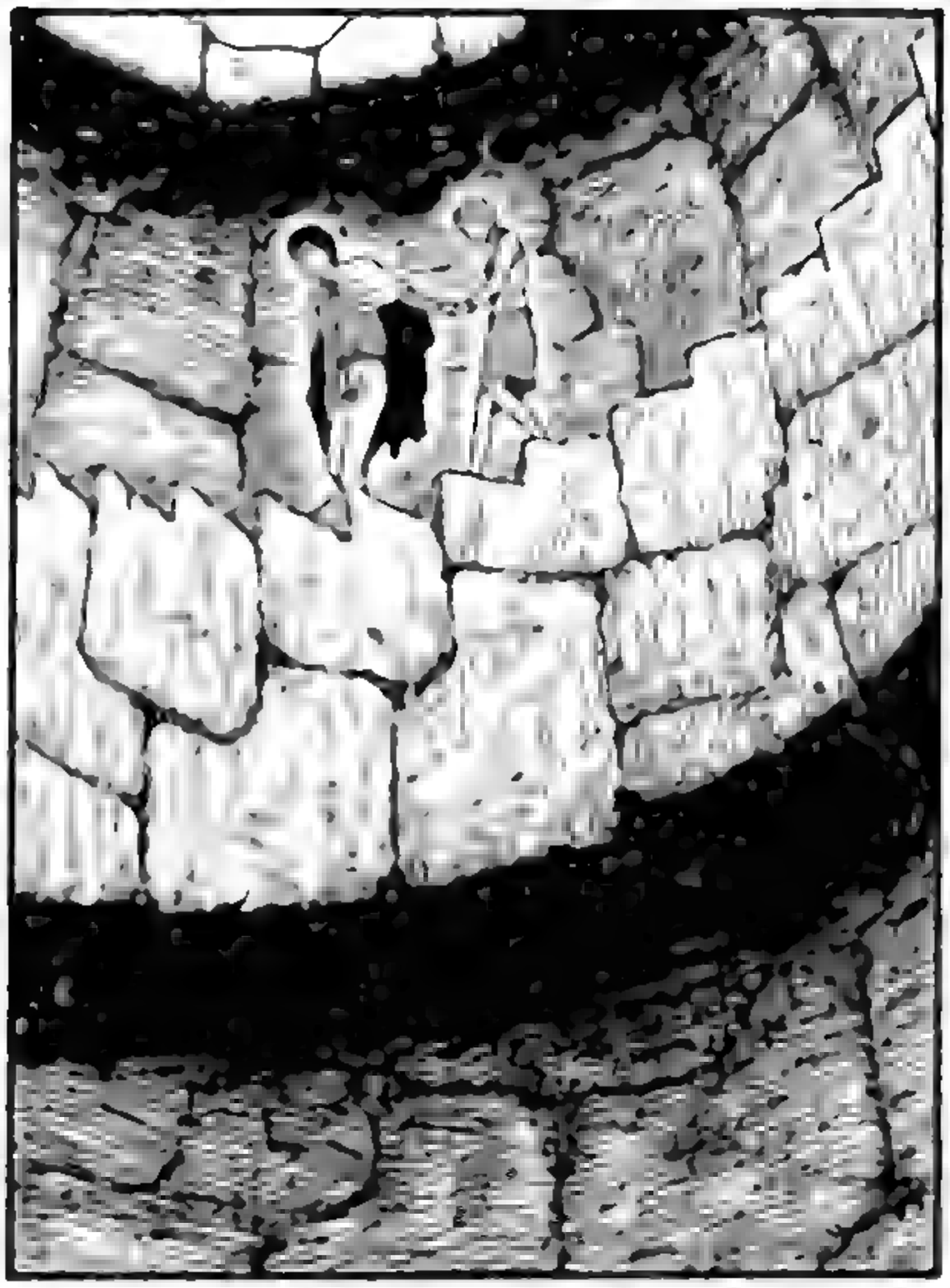
THAT'S THE ONLY PLACE LEFT.

SHUI-CHI, I...

WE'LL BOTH GO.

TUG

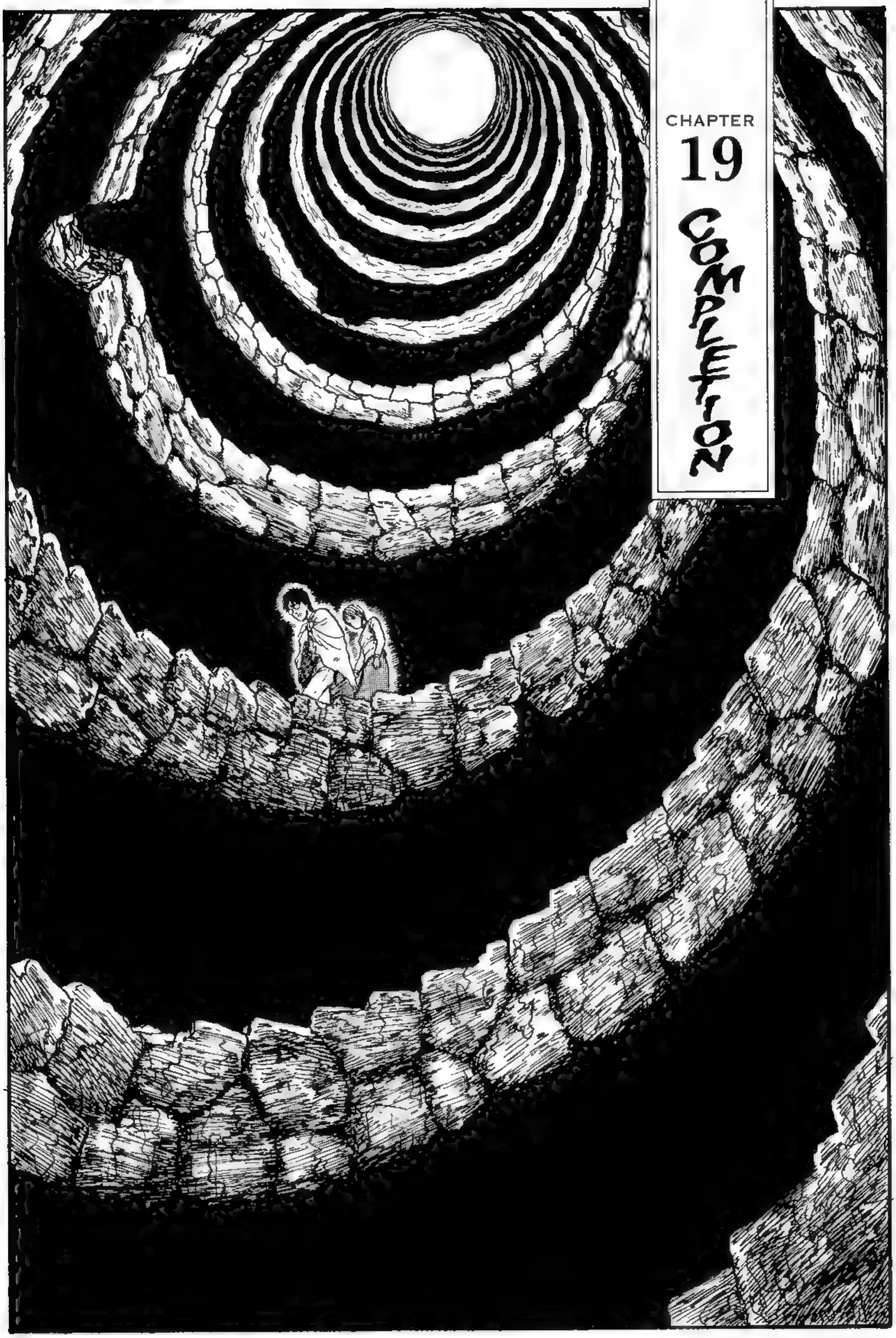
YES.



LET'S GO.

CHAPTER
19

COMPLETION



IT SEEMS TO GO ON AND ON... FOREVER...

I WONDER HOW FAR WE HAVE TO GO.

SWAY

DON'T LOOK DOWN THERE!

KIRIE! BE CAREFUL!

SWAY !

...HOW MUCH TIME PASSED.

I DON'T KNOW ...

COME ON.

GUESS HE GOT LEFT BEHIND.

HE MUST'VE COME HERE FROM THE ROW HOUSES.

THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOMETHING WONDERFUL DOWN THERE...

WAIT... TAKE ME WITH YOU...

W-WAIT...

O-OKAY ...

COME ON, KIRIE.

WE CAN'T. WE DON'T HAVE THE STRENGTH TO CARRY YOU.

LET GO OF ME!

LET GO!

CHOMP

TAKE ME WITH YOU!

LET GO OF ME!

STOP IT! LET GO OF HER!!

AAGH !

?!

SHUICHI?!

AIEE!

HUFF

HUFF

SHUICHI!

HUFF

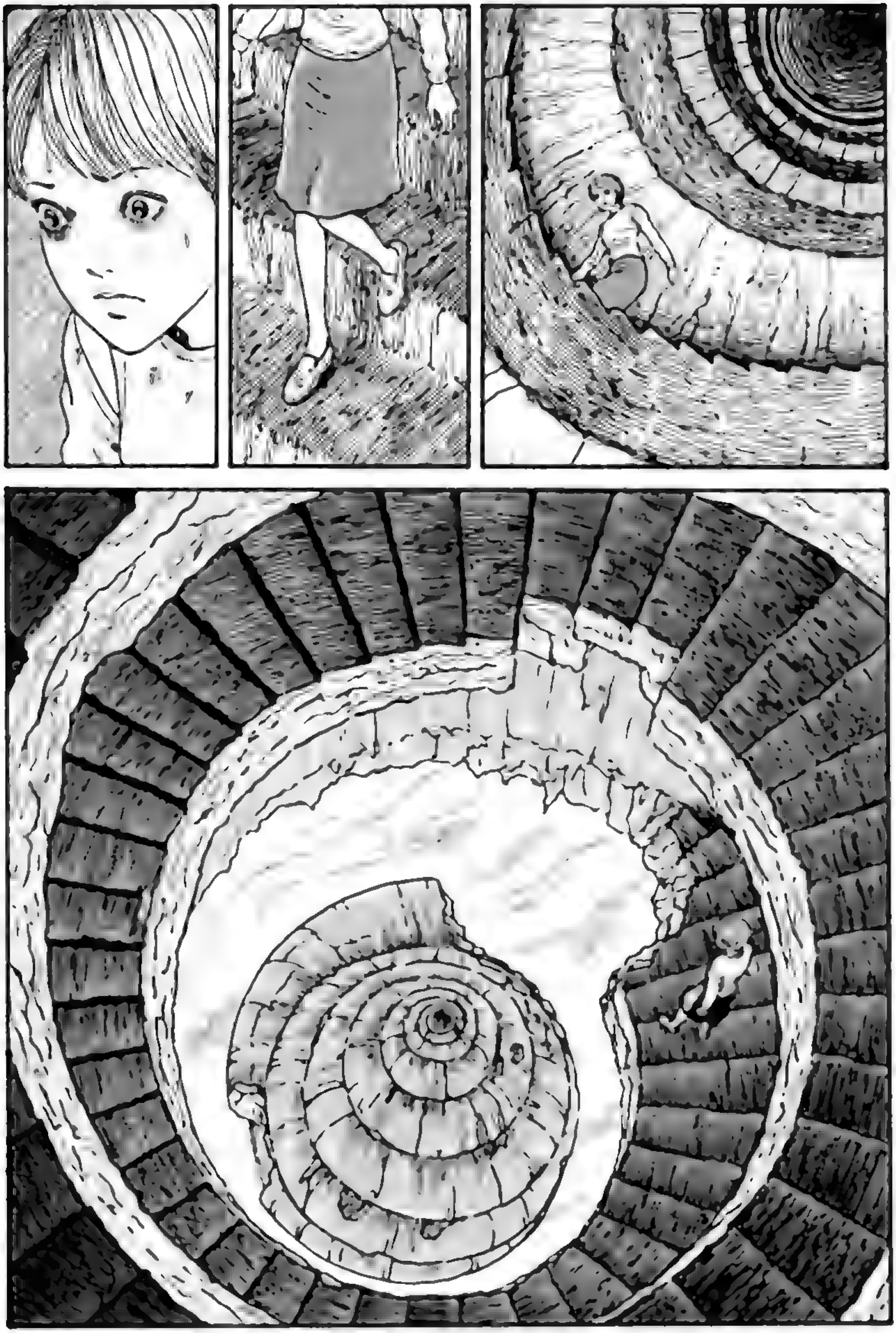
HUFF

THERE'S A LIGHT DOWN BELOW...

!

THE LIGHT CAUGHT ME, DREW ME ON...

I WONDER WHAT IT IS?



GULP

GRAB

SLIP

WHFF

WHUD

... HOLD ON...

CAN'T ...

HWOOOOO

EEYAA!

AH?

I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE.

HHHOOOOO

BUT SOMEHOW MY BODY FELL SLOWLY, AS IF A GREAT WHIRLWIND WERE CARRYING ME DOWN...

THE ANCIENT RUINS EMITTED A MESMERIZING LIGHT.

IT WAS A CITY OF SPIRALS, UNLIKE ANYTHING I'D EVER SEEN.

WHERE'S SHUICHI?

HE SHOULD BE NEARBY...

THE FLOOR WAS MADE OF EVERYONE WHO HAD POURED IN FROM KUROUZU-CHO.

THEY WERE ALL STARING AT THE LIGHT.

SHUICHI!

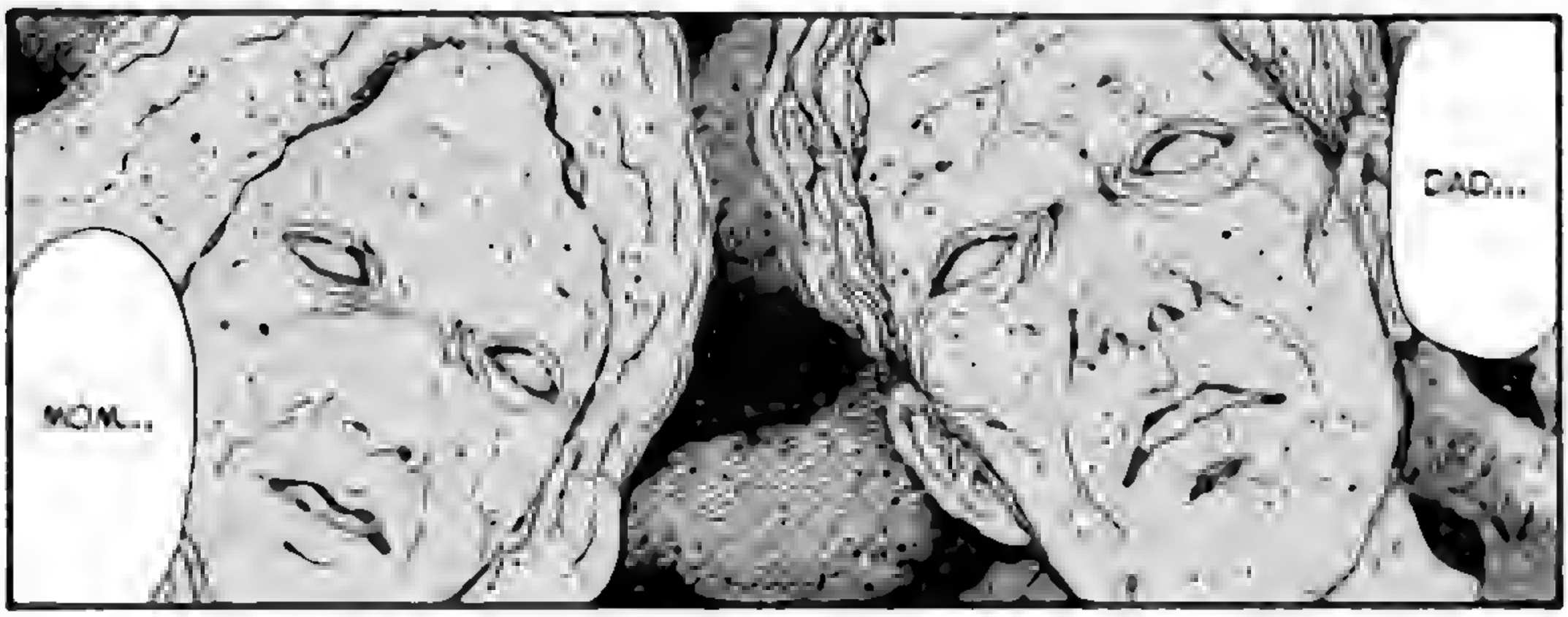
SHUICHI!

...STONE, AS IF TURNING INTO RUINS THEM-SELVES...

STRANGE... THE FARTHER I GO...

...THE MORE THE PEOPLE SEEM LIKE...

EH?!


MOM...
CAD...

KIRIE...
KIRIE...
SO YOU WERE HERE...

YOU'RE ALIVE!

SHUICHI!

KIRIE...

THEY'RE LIKE A LIVING THING...

...WITH A WILL OF ITS OWN.

YES...BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN WALK.

...LOOK AT THE RUINS.

KIRIE...

...AND CURSING US FOR BEING DOWN HERE, HIDDEN FROM THOSE EYES UP THERE.

I FEEL LIKE IT'S PERMEATING ME...

...BUT EVERY FEW HUNDRED, OR THOUSANDS, OR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS...IT CAN REACH THE PEOPLE ABOVE GROUND. AND THOUGH ITS BUILDERS ARE GONE...

...MAYBE IT'S STILL BUILDING ITSELF.

SPIRALS SUCK THINGS IN... THE EYE FOLLOWS THE PATTERN...

...TO THE CENTER. I DON'T KNOW WHO... OR *WHAT*... BUILT ALL THIS, OR WHY...

...

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

SHUI-CHI...

I THINK THIS CURSE WILL SOON BE OVER...

LEAVE ME HERE. YOU HAVE TO KEEP FIGHTING.

KIRIE... I'M DONE, I CAN'T GO ON.

I'M STAYING WITH YOU.

I CAN'T GO ON EITHER.

CLASP

SSHHRRR

SSHHRR

SSHHRRRRRRR

URRRR

SHHRRR

KRPPPP

SKRPP

SHOOOH

CHRRRR

JUST AS TIME SPED UP WHEN WE WERE ON THE OUTSKIRTS, IN THE CENTER OF THE SPIRAL IT STOOD STILL.

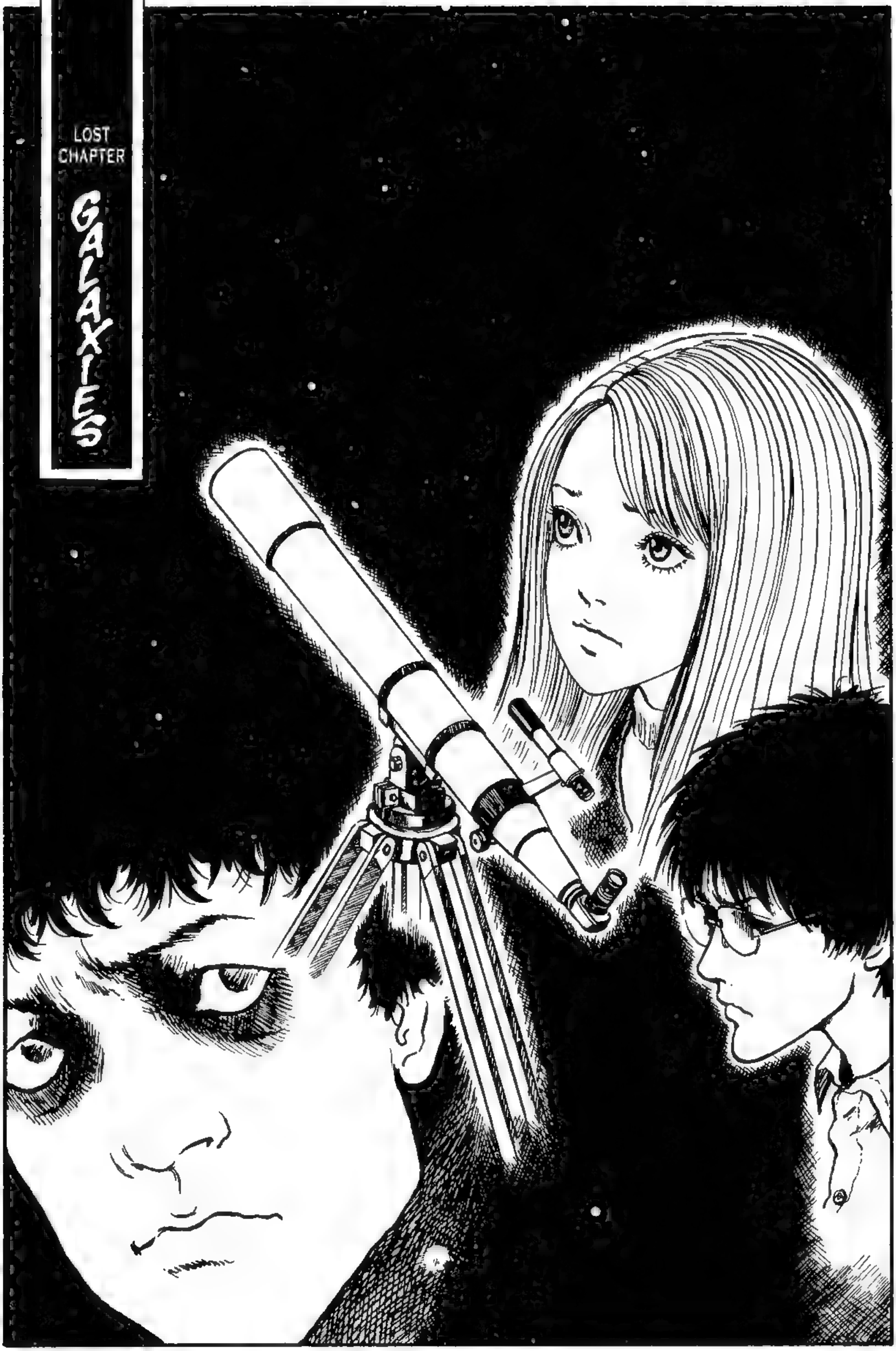
AND WITH THE SPIRAL COMPLETE, A STRANGE THING HAPPENED.

AND IT WILL BE THE SAME MOMENT WHEN IT ENDS AGAIN... WHEN THE NEXT KUROUZU-CHO IS BUILT AMIDST THE RUINS OF THE OLD ONE.

SO THE CURSE WAS OVER THE SAME MOMENT IT BEGAN, THE ENDLESS FROZEN MOMENT I SPENT IN SHUICHI'S ARMS.

WHEN THE ETERNAL SPIRAL AWAKES ONCE MORE.

THE END


LOST
CHAPTER
GALAXIES

LOOK AT THAT, KIRIE.

CAN YOU SEE IT?

WOW, YOU'RE RIGHT ...

I SEE IT, SHUICHI.

THIS GALAXY ISN'T LISTED IN ANY BOOK.

I FOUND IT LAST NIGHT.

THE NEXT DAY...

...AN ENTIRE GALAXY? YOUR TELESCOPE WOULD HAVE TO BE PRETTY STRONG.

THAT'S QUITE UNLIKELY. A COMET MAYBE, BUT...

YES, MR. YOKOTA.

WHAT? YOU DISCOVERED A NEW GALAXY?

HE'S SUCH A MANIAC HE BUILT AN OBSERVATORY IN HIS HOUSE.

ALL RIGHT... I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S AN ARMCHAIR AS-TRONOMER. I'LL ASK HIM.

HMM...

PLEASE COME AND TAKE A LOOK!

SHUICHI'S REALLY GOOD AT ASTRONOMY. I'M SURE HE HASN'T MADE A MISTAKE.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK THROUGH MY TELE-SCOPE.

HMM... YOU'RE SHU-ICHI, RIGHT?

SO ANYWAY, TORINO ...

WE WERE WONDER-ING IF YOU COULD CHECK THIS OUT.

IN SERPENS CAPUT, LEFT OF THE GAMMA STAR.

WHAT'S THE POSITION?

THERE IT IS! I'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE!

YOU'RE RIGHT!

WHAT ?!

...

WE'LL HAVE TO CHECK WITH THE NATIONAL ASTRO-NOMICAL OBSERVATORY TO MAKE SURE IT ISN'T REGISTERED YET.

HOLD ON, LET'S NOT JUMP TO CONCLU-SIONS.

REALLY?! THEN IT'S TRUE?!

...WITH THAT *THING!*

DON'T SAY THAT! I DON'T WANT MY NAME AS-SOCIATED WITH...

...

BUT... IF IT'S TRUE, THEN THIS IS A REAL FIND!

THAT'S RIGHT.

IT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE NAMED AFTER YOU. THE SHUICHI GALAXY!

GOOD WORK! THIS IS TRULY INCREDIBLE!

TORINO WILL REPORT IT TO THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY, AND WE'LL WAIT FOR THEIR RESULTS. I HAVE HIGH HOPES, THOUGH!

IT REALLY IS A WEIRD GALAXY.

SUCH STRANGE LUMINOSITY ...SUCH CROOKED ARMS...

...THEN IT'S ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!

IF THIS IS A NEW DISCOVERY...

BUT WHY DIDN'T I NOTICE IT UNTIL NOW?

IT'S SO CLEAR. HOW COULD I HAVE MISSED IT?

I WAS SO EXCITED I COULDN'T SLEEP!

...SO ONE OF KIRIE'S FRIENDS MIGHT HAVE MADE A GREAT DISCOV-ERY!

YOUR BOYFRIEND'S SO SMART.

WOW! COOL!

I'M ORDERING ONE MYSELF.

IF ANY OF YOU HAVE TELESCOPES YOU SHOULD TAKE A LOOK TONIGHT.

THERE WAS A SUDDEN ASTRONOMY BOOM AT OUR SCHOOL.

THE UNIVERSE IS EX-PANDING, SO...

DID YOU SEE THE METEOR SWARM IN LEO?

I'D BETTER GO CHECK ON HIM...

HE WAS SCARED.

...HE DIDN'T SEEM AT ALL THRILLED.

IT'S GREAT THAT SHUICHI DISCOVERED THIS, BUT...

SHIVER SHIVER

CAN'T YOU FEEL IT?!

F-FEEL WHAT?

I CAN FEEL IT...

WHAT'S WRONG, SHUICHI?!

I FEEL THE *RADIO WAVES!*

THE RADIO WAVES!

THEY'RE TALKING TO ME... SEND-ING A MES-SAGE!

THEY'RE BEING TRANS-MITTED INTO MY HEAD...

POWER-FUL WAVES!

RADIO WAVES ...?

GET AHOLD OF YOUR-SELF!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

AHH!

SOME-THING'S TRYING TO TELL ME SOME-THING...

WH-WHAT IS THIS SENSA-TION?

IT'S SO... SO...

...SO BEAUTI-FUL! THE MORE I LOOK AT IT...

PLEASE!

AGHH! STOP!

AGHH!

STOP IT!!

HUFF

HUFF

TUP

TUP

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

CAN YOU HEAR ME?

SHUICHI... IT'S ME!

IT'S ME, MR. TORINO.

IF YOU CAN, ANSWER ME!

THE SAME WAY WE'RE COMMUNI-CATING NOW.

I KNEW RIGHT AWAY... I CAN SENSE YOUR PRESENCE LIKE A BEACON.

HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE I LIVE?

...I'VE GOT TO *KILL YOU!*

...THAT IF I WANT THE CREDIT ...

SOME-THING IS TELLING ME... SOME ENTITY...

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

SO YOU FEEL THE RADIO WAVES TOO.

...TO KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CAN KILL ME.

SOME-THING'S BEEN TELLING ME...

I WANT THAT GALAXY !!

I'LL BE FRANK! I WANT YOU TO RELINQUISH YOUR CLAIM AS DISCOVERER OF THE GALAXY!

I JUST WANT TO TALK.

I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT.

YOU WANT IT, IT'S YOURS.

FINE. I NEVER WANTED TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT ANYWAY.

...

...THAT'S ONLY IF THE INTERNA-TIONAL ASTRONOMI-CAL UNION SANCTIONS THE FIND...

YES... BUT WE BOTH KNOW...

SO I'M THE DISCOV-ERER?

THANK YOU! I KNEW YOU'D UNDER-STAND.

...UNTIL I FOUND IT...

NO ONE KNEW ABOUT IT FOR BILLIONS OF YEARS...

I'M QUITE SURE IT WILL! IT WASN'T DISCOVERED UNTIL NOW!

MR. TORINO LET ME USE HIS TELESCOPE. I HEARD HE'S THE ONE WHO DISCOVERED IT.

IT'S A MESMER-IZING SIGHT...

I SAW THAT NEW GALAXY! IT WAS AMAZING.

REALLY? I SAW IT TOO.

NO, MR. TORINO SAYS IT WAS HIM.

THAT'S FUNNY, I THOUGHT IT WAS SHUICHI SAITO.

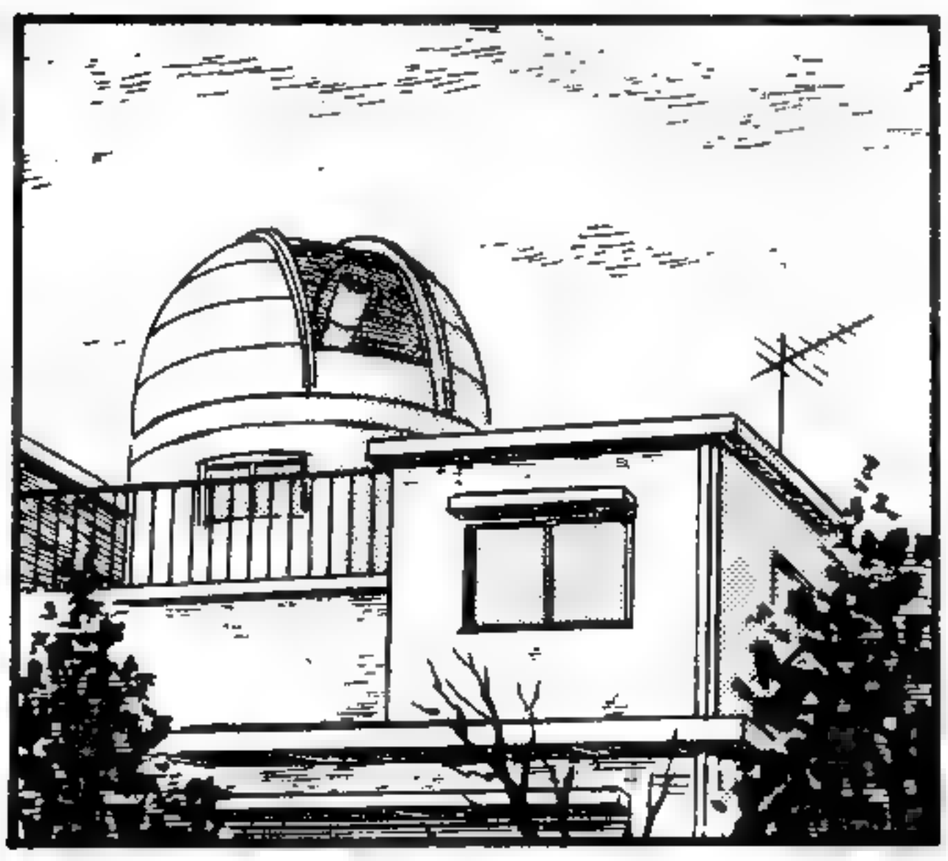
HUH? MR. TORINO?

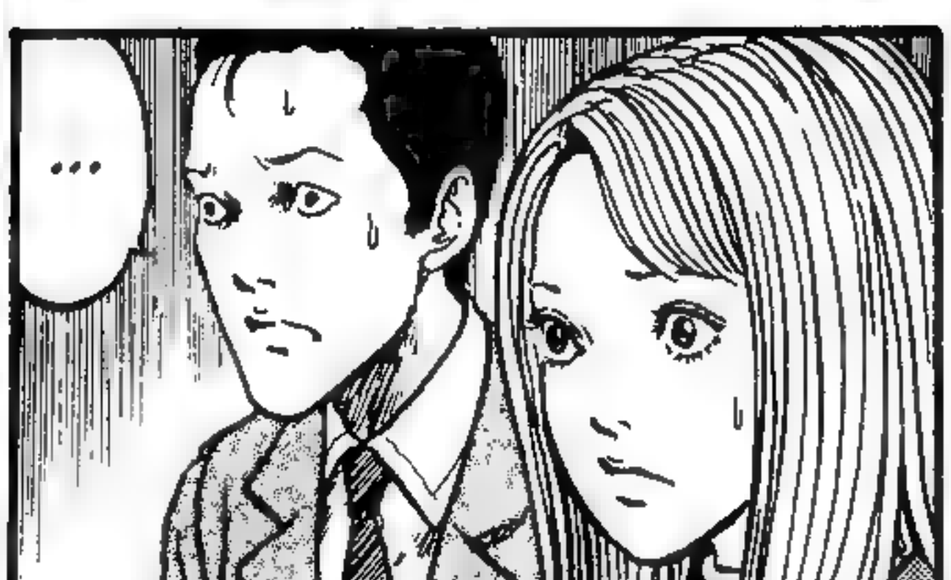
WELL, LET'S GO CHECK WITH HIM.

IT MUST BE A MISTAKE.

BUT THAT'S WHAT I HEARD.

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT MR. TORINO?





...

NO...

...NOT TRUE!

I AM IN FACT THE DISCOVERER.

YES... I DID MAKE THAT CLAIM.

HE RELINQUISHED HIS CLAIM, SO I DISCOVERED IT BY DEFAULT.

IT'S NOT TRUE! SHUICHI FOUND IT BEFORE YOU DID!

I TALKED IT OVER WITH HIM.

OH... YES IT IS.

THAT'S RIGHT, TORINO ...IT'S NOT FAIR!

YOU CAN'T MEAN IT!

...FAR GREATER THAN MOST SO-CALLED "RADIO GALAXIES."

IT SENDS OUT POWERFUL TRANSMISSIONS...

IT'LL PROVIDE YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. I'VE ALREADY FOUND ONE VERY INTERESTING FEATURE.

IN ANY CASE, IT'S A WONDROUS GALAXY.

HEEHEEHEEHEE

...I CAN SEND RADIO WAVES TOO!

AND THE MOST AMAZ-ING THING IS...

THOSE RADIO WAVES, THAT RADIATION FROM MILLIONS OF LIGHT YEARS AWAY, IS BEING SENT TO *ME!*

I KNOW THIS ...

...BE-CAUSE I MYSELF HAVE RECEIVED ITS SIGNALS!

THAT GALAXY IS *MINE!*

GET OUT! I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO SAY!

UH... TORINO...

...

AND I WON'T LET YOU TAKE CREDIT FROM SHUICHI!

WAIT A MINUTE!

BY DEFAULT *I'M* THE DISCOVER-ER! AFTER ALL, I SAW IT BEFORE YOU DID!!

HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT. I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS ON ANY STAR CHART.

YEAH, ANOTHER GALAXY. IT'S NOT THE ONE IN THE SERPENT CONSTELLA-TION.

HEY... WHAT'S THIS?!

DID YOU FIND SOME-THING?!

STRANGELY, MANY MORE NEW GALAXIES WERE DISCOVERED...

...BY PEOPLE ALL OVER TOWN.

ANOTHER DISCOV-ERY? LET'S GO HOME AND CHECK OUR BOOKS!

BEEN OBSERV-ING IT FOR A WHILE NOW.

I'VE GOT THE SAME THING OVER HERE.

UM...

UNH...

ONE NIGHT ...

COULD THESE BE THE RADIO WAVES?

LIKE VOICES IN STATIC ...

IT'S COME OVER ME SO SUDDENLY... LIKE SOMETHING'S INVADING MY THOUGHTS...

WHAT IS THIS FEEL-ING?

YEAH? WHERE'S YOUR PROOF?!

HEY!! I WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND THE SPIRAL GALAXY NEXT TO LEO REGULUS!!

HM?!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE GALAXY NEXT TO COMA BERENICES IS MINE!

I'M THE ONE WHO FOUND IT!

HUH?!

I'M HEARING PEOPLE TALKING IN MY HEAD!

I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!

YOU DAMN THIEF! YOU STOLE MY DISCOVERY!

WH-WHAT IS THIS?

LIAR! THAT'S WHAT THEY TOLD ME!

THE STARS ARE TELLING ME, KILL, KILL...

I'M ALREADY HEADED YOUR WAY. YOU'LL SEE...

YOU'LL BE DEAD IF YOU SHOW YOUR FACE AROUND HERE! I DARE YOU!

YAAA!

TAKE THIS, YOU BASTARD... AAGH!

HUFF... UFF... GASP... AHH...

UFF... HUFF...HUFF... HUUH...

NOW I SEE YOU.

COME ON THEN, YOU BETTER BE ARMED!

I'M COMING CLOSER... 100 METERS... 90...80...

UGGH...
NUH...

HUNH...
YOU
BASTARD...

GHGG
!

OKUMURA MARKET

OKUMURA MARKET

SHFFF

THAT
MAN...
MUR-
DERED...

DID IT
REALLY
HAPPEN?!

WEEOOO WEEOOO

OKUMURA MARKET

HUFF... HUFF...

WELL, ISN'T THAT HOW WE'RE TALKING RIGHT NOW?

THIS IS SO STRANGE... CLAIRVOYANCE? I WONDER IF IT'S FROM THE RADIO WAVES.

ME TOO! IT JUST APPEARED IN MY HEAD, AND THEN I CAME HERE AND THERE WAS A CROWD. I GUESS EVERYONE ELSE SAW IT TOO.

YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS, BUT...I SAW IT ALL HAPPEN.

I MEAN, I KEEP HEARING THESE ARGUMENTS... IN MY HEAD... NIGHT AFTER NIGHT!

DOES THIS MEAN SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT HAPPEN AGAIN?

YOU'RE RIGHT! OUR LIPS AREN'T EVEN MOVING!

SO THE SPIRAL GALAX-IES ARE CAUSING THIS TOO?

UNNH... SO MUCH NOISE...

BUT...BUT, THE THING IS...

I FOUND YOU, KIRIE!!

I AL-READY TOLD YOU!!

I LOVE YOU, TOO...

I LOVE YOU...

TAKE YOUR BATH RIGHT NOW!

AND IT'S A GOAL!!!

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED ITS POLICIES TO STIMULATE THE STAGNANT ECONOMY...

...

!

OH!

THAT'S MR. TORINO!

WHAT'S HE DOING BEHIND THAT CORNER...?

TMP

TRUH

HUFF

HUFF

SOME-BODY HELP ME!

HELP ME!

STOP, KIRIE!

YOU'RE IN MY WAY! I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!

NO ONE WILL EVEN KNOW YOU'RE BEING KILLED!

IT'S A FOUL BALL!

THE WHOLE AREA IS DROWNED IN NOISE!

AHA HA HA! THEY CAN'T HEAR YOU!

HELP!

BRUSH YOUR TEETH BEFORE YOU GO TO BED!

THEN HOW ABOUT TOMORROW ?

HA HA HA HA!

SOMEONE! PLEASE HELP ME!

HELP! PLEASE!

WHUD

GRAB

WHAT...?

HA HA HA...

DIE!

ONCE YOU'RE DEAD, THE GALAXY'S MINE!

NOW IT'S OVER!!

EH?

I-IT CAN'T BE!

WHAT... WHAT... WHAT IS THIS?

IT'S VISIBLE TO THE *NAKED EYE!*

I WAS THE FIRST HUMAN TO SEE!

AND I... I SAW IT FIRST!

THIS IS STUPEN-DOUS!

THIS IS WONDER-FUL!

IF IT'S "YES," SEND ME A SIGNAL! SEND ME ALL OF THEM! BEAM ME ALL YOUR TRANS-MISSIONS!

AM I RIGHT? ANSWER ME, GALAXIES!

NOW!

TELL ME, STARS!

ANSWER ME! NOW!

I-I FEEL IT!!

AHH!

EEM

EEEE

EEE

EEE

EEE

SHWAAAA

DID IT REALLY HAPPEN? I ONLY KNOW WHAT I SAW.

AFTER EXPLODING LIKE AN EGG IN A MICROWAVE, TORINO'S HEAD TURNED INTO A SMALL GALAXY AND FLEW OFF INTO THE NIGHT SKY.

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY'S DATA ANALYSIS CENTER, NONE OF THE NUMEROUS GALAXY SIGHTINGS REPORTED IN KUROUZU-CHO WERE CONFIRMED.

THEY WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN... BY ANYONE.

THE END

AFTERWORD

THE SPIRAL ...

WITH THE MANGA *UZUMAKI*, I, JUNJI ITO, ATTEMPTED TO FIND AN ANSWER TO THE SECRETS OF THIS ENIGMATIC SHAPE.

SUCH A MYSTERIOUS PATTERN...

NEXT, I DECIDED TO READ ALL THE REFERENCE MATERIALS ABOUT SPIRALS THAT I COULD FIND.

I ALWAYS ENDED UP FALLING ASLEEP PARTWAY THROUGH ...

TO BEGIN MY STUDIES, I SPENT HOURS STARING INTO ITS DEPTHS.

TO UNDERSTAND THE SPIRAL, ONE MUST CAREFULLY OBSERVE IT.

I JUST ENDED UP FEELING DIZZY...

GURGLE

THE WATER IN THE TUB WOULD FORM A WHIRLPOOL AND DRAIN AWAY...

POP

I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING ELSE TO DO BUT ACTUALLY MAKE SPIRALS MYSELF.

SUSHI ROLLS, *MORIGUCHI* PICKLES, FIDDLEHEAD FERNS, *ZENMAI*, TURBAN SHELLS...

SOFT ICE CREAM, SPIRAL-SHAPED COOKIES, *NEJIRINBO* RICE CANDY... IT WAS ALL DELICIOUS.

I STILL DIDN'T UNDERSTAND MUCH, SO I TOOK THE NEXT STEP OF *EATING* SPIRALS.

ITO, WHERE'S THIS MONTH'S COMIC?!

My editor, Nakaguma

AND SO... AS A RESULT OF MY RESEARCHES, THE ANSWER TO THE ENIGMA IS NEAR AT HAND. SOON I WILL REPORT MY FINDINGS... BUT *IS THE WORLD READY?*

ALL THEY DID WAS LEAVE BEHIND ORANGE-COLORED FECES.

FINALLY, I RAISED SNAILS.

AFTERWARD

RRRIIINNG

I MEAN... UM... JUNJI ITO MANGA INC.

HELLO, THIS IS SPIRAL RESEARCH LABORA-

I'VE FOUND SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL!

LISTEN! THIS IS BIG! B-I-G!

WHAT? WHAT'S GOING ON?

ITO! THIS IS NAKAGUMA FROM BIG COMIC SPIRITS! I'VE GOT INCREDIBLE NEWS!

I'M NOT REALLY SURE. ALL I KNOW IS IT'S SOME GUY WHO LIVES BY HIMSELF UP IN THE MOUNTAINS OF G__ PREFECTURE!

WHAT? SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL? WHO IS IT?

K. MINAMI! TAKE CARE OF THINGS WHILE I'M GONE!

YES, SIR!

YES! SEE YOU IN G__ PREFECTURE!

ITO! LET'S GO MEET HIM!

SLAM

MY CURIOSITY GROWS DEEPER BY THE SECOND!

EVEN *I* COULDN'T SOLVE THE ENIGMA OF THE SPIRAL. WHO COULD THIS MYSTERIOUS PERSON BE?

ZZZZ

MY EDITOR, NAKAGUMA

UZ

SHWOOOM

AND WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL?!

WILL WE EVEN COME BACK FROM THIS ALIVE?

HMM...HE LIVES ALONE DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS. COULD HE BE AN OLD HERMIT, SOME GNARLED BACKWOODSMAN? OR...PERHAPS HE'S A SCIENTIST THROWN INTO DISREPUTE BECAUSE OF HIS UNSPEAKABLE FINDINGS!

WHUP

AAH!

Spiral Theory

Spiral Yoga

BUT WERE THOSE LOWERING CLOUDS A PREMONITION OF THE DOOM AWAITING US BEYOND THOSE MOUNTAINS OF–

AT LAST OUR DESTINATION LAY BEFORE US!

JUST A DREAM ...!

WHAT A RIP-OFF!

AFTER-WORD

THE HORROR ...

bip bip bip bip

THE HOR-ROR...

SLURP SLURP

ITO? WHAT'S GOING ON!?

N-NAKAGUMA? I-I'M IN TROUBLE...

BIG COMIC SPIRITS. NAKA-GUMA SPEAK-ING.

RINNG RINNG

DON'T YOU REMEMBER? LAST VOLUME? THE TWO OF US WENT UP TO THE MOUNTAINS OF G__ PREFECTURE AND MET THAT MAD HERMIT?

"UZUMAKI-SEN'NIN"?! WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THE SPIRAL MASTER-UZUMAKI-SEN'NIN-IS IN MY HOUSE!

H-HE'S *HERE*!

CLICK

ITO... STOP KIDDING AROUND.

THAT WASN'T A DREAM! *IT WAS REAL!* A REAL PUNCH-LINE!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THAT ENDED WITH A STUPID "IT WAS JUST A DREAM!" PUNCHLINE!

SLURP SLURP

SLURP SLURP

SIGH... EVEN MY EDITOR HAS ABAN-DONED ME...

SLURP SLURP

SLUP SLURP

SLURP LICK

THIS TIME... THERE IS NO PUNCH-LINE...

...

BUT FIRST, I NEED MORE FOOD! BRING ME MORE DELICIOUS SPIRALS TO EAT!

SO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE SECRET OF THE SPIRAL, DO YOU? THAT'S EASILY DONE! *GYEE HEE HEE!*

THE END

UZUMAKI

UZUMAKI
Deluxe Edition

Story & Art by
JUNJI ITO

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by Junji ITO
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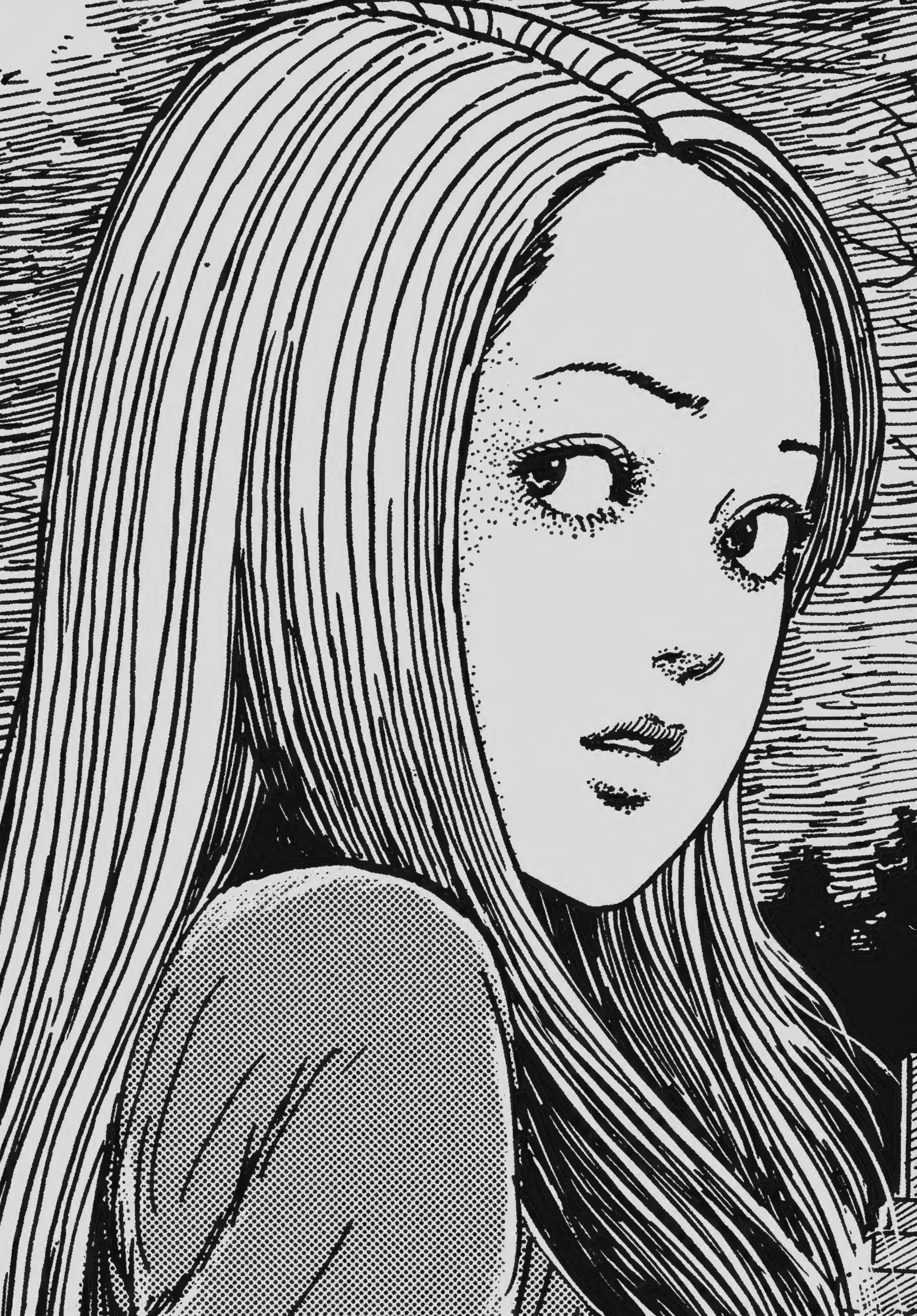
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Junji Ito debuted as a horror manga artist in 1987 with the first story in his successful *Tomie* series. *Uzumaki*, drawn from 1998 to 1999, was adapted into a live-action movie, which was released in America by Viz Films and Tidepoint Pictures. Ito's influences include the classic manga artists Kazuo Umezu and Hideshi Hino, as well as authors Yasutaka Tsutsui and H.P. Lovecraft. Other works include *Gyo* (VIZ Media) and the *Museum of Terror* series.